







*H. R. Carver*

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A SHORT OUTLINE  
OF THE  
HISTORY OF RUSSIA

THE HISTORY OF

SCOTLAND

FROM THE EARLIEST  
TO THE PRESENT

40230

A SHORT OUTLINE  
OF THE  
HISTORY OF RUSSIA

BY  
B. J. L.

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# SHORT OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF RUSSIA

## CHAPTER LXXVII

### THE PATRIARCH NIKON AND THE AFFAIRS OF THE CHURCH

NIKON (or Nicetas, while in the world) was born in 1605, when the stormy epoch of Russian history denominated 'the troublous times' occurred, and under whose influence his childhood was passed. He was of Mordvi origin, born in the village of Viliameenov, near Nijni-Novgorod, and was the son of a peasant. Nikita (Nicetas) soon lost his mother. His father married a second time, and Nikita had much to suffer from his stepmother's temper, so that even his life was more than once in danger. In early years, Nikita showed a very strong will, unusual capacity, and a marked inclination for a monastic life. Young Nikita meanwhile managed to learn to read and write, which, at that remote epoch, proved certain means of advancement even to those of little talent. Great strength of mind and energy did not long allow Nikita to remain in the sphere to which he originally belonged. The gifted youth was a remarkable figure among the crowd, and was soon destined to move onwards. At a later period, it was remarked that the persecution he had suffered in childhood, from his stepmother, for ever afterwards left evil traces in his disposition. He entered a monastery on probation, but, at the desire of his parents, he was summoned thence, once more to the world. He then married and received the living of a priest when only twenty years old. In that sphere his talent was so apparent that the Moscow merchants urged him to go to that capital. Nikita lived ten years with his wife. During that space they lost their three children, which he considered a sign that God had destined him for a monastic life. Nikita thereupon separated from his wife, persuaded her also to enter a cloister, and himself withdrew to the hermitage of Anzersk, in a desert spot near the White Sea. There he adopted the monastic garb. The fame of his strictly ascetic life quickly spread to northern monasteries and finally reached Moscow. In 1646 he appeared there and produced a deep impression on the pious



young sovereign, Alexei Michaelovitch. By his express desire, Nikita, or Nikon henceforth, was appointed archimandrite of the Novospaski monastery. In that capacity he every week appeared at the palace, in order to converse with Alexis. Meanwhile, Nikon lost no opportunity to intercede for the oppressed, as well as for widows and orphans. In 1648 Nikon was consecrated as metropolitan of Novgorod. Not only did Nikon there exercise unlimited control over church affairs, but he also acquired influence on civil administration. Besides, the sovereign's esteem for Nikon was even more augmented after the famous Novgorodian revolt, quelled by the firmness of the metropolitan. When Joseph, patriarch of Moscow, died, the vacant patriarchal chair was offered to Nikon, but he refused it. Whereupon, in the Cathedral of the Assumption (at the Moscow Kreml), Alexis and those around him, with tears, implored Nikon not to reject this dignity. Nikon, then turning to the boyards and people, inquired: 'Would they honour him as a pastor and a father? Would they allow him to organise the church?' All present swore to do as he desired. Then Nikon consented, and was consecrated patriarch of Moscow in 1652.

1652—Nikon  
patriarch of  
Moscow.

The naturally pious, impressionable mind of Alexei Michaelovitch was soon entirely influenced by the patriarch. The latter received every mark of confidence, and was even intrusted with nearly the complete administration of state, during any temporary absence of the sovereign. Like the father of Michael Feodorovitch, Nikon, too, in documents, entitled himself 'August Sovereign.' Philaret, however, had borne that title not merely as patriarch, but as the sovereign's father.

As far as clerical affairs were concerned, Nikon's most important act was the correction of books used in church service. During the course of time, many mistakes had gradually appeared in church manuscripts, from the ignorance of scribes and copyists. When the art of printing became known in Moscow, these mistakes were of course repeated in printed books. Not only so; along with mistakes, various statements were made, not in accordance with the statutes of the Russo-Greek church.

For example, the word *Isoos* (Jesus) should have been written *Isoos*. The mass should be performed with seven pieces of holy bread, and not with five. Two fingers, but not three, should be bent while making the sign of the cross. The beard and whiskers were not to be shaved, etc. But, after all, these comparatively trifling differences of opinion were not supremely important to many, but merely served as pretexts to show discontent with the Moscovite clerical hierarchy, and especially with the influence of Western civilisation, which already began to appear.

As we have previously remarked, the correction of church books began during the reign of Michael Feodorovitch.

The commencement of the art of printing in the Moscovite state dates from the reign of Ioann IV. (1534-1584). Then there came from western Europe two workmen (printers), Ivan Feodorov and Peter Mstislavetz. They organised the first printing-press in Moscow in 1553. The first book there printed was a copy of *The Acts of the Apostles*. In 1565 Feodorov and Mstislavetz were both accused of heresy, and forced to seek safety by flight. Their chief accusers were scribes and copyists, of course highly displeased at the new order of things, because it rendered copying of no longer use. Notwithstanding, the art of printing books had already taken root in Moscow.

Feodorov and Mstislavetz retired to western Russia, and, for some time, printed church books at a small spot named Zabloodov, in the present government of Grodno, and on the estate of a Polish pan (nobleman), Hodkevitch. Then Mstislavetz worked in Vilna, in the Russian typography of Mamonitch. Feodorov continued his labour at Ostrog (government of Volhynia) at the estate of Prince Constantine Ostrojski.

A very rare copy of the Scriptures in Russ, and called the 'Ostrojski edition,' still exists.

At first, the correction of church books was intrusted to Dionysius, the celebrated archimandrite of the Trinity cloister, and to some monks, but they were persecuted and imprisoned for the supposed heresy they had introduced in the corrections. The latter were thereupon confided to others, who likewise maintained the above-mentioned opinions and transferred them to the newly-printed church books. In order to decide the questions which thus arose, Nikon summoned a Clerical Council in 1654. It was then resolved to correct the books according to the old Russian manuscripts, which, for that purpose, were collected in large numbers in Moscow. The corrected copies and new editions for service were next distributed among different churches. Books of previous editions Nikon everywhere ordered to be removed. But against these measures part of the clergy, who disliked Nikon for his severity, rose in open opposition. They excited the people by telling them that the patriarch had introduced heretical innovations and corrupted the purity of the faith. Whereupon those favourable to the old church books broke out into loud complaints against the patriarch. Meanwhile, the cruel punishment which the stern Nikon inflicted on the un-submissive clergy, subordinate to him, rendered them martyrs in the judgment of the people. From this epoch, books printed by the patriarch Joseph, or the old editions, acquired a hallowed signification for those displeased with the new



corrections. The former were carefully concealed. It was thought that with them only could one pray aright, while Nikon, on the contrary, was considered Anti-christ. Those who adhered to the old church books received the name of 'Old Believers,' or 'Raskolniki.' The chief leaders of the 'Raskolniki' were priests named Lazarus and Nikita Poostosviat, a diakon (under clergyman), Feodor, and especially an arch-priest Avvakoom, distinguished by extensive reading, as well as a bold, energetic disposition. His numerous compositions, written in glowing, powerful language, had great success amongst the people.

The patriarch Nikon, after exciting against himself many of the clergy and people, soon made enemies among the boyards also. He, besides, did not fail to abuse his influence over the sovereign, but desired to secure as a permanent right the administrative importance only conferred by the personal inclination of Alexei Michaelovitch. In fact, Nikon aimed at making secular power subservient to the clergy. That aim, however, could not succeed in the Moscovite state, where the sovereign's sway was absolute. Irritated by Nikon's arrogance and demands for perfect submission, many boyards hated him, and tried to weaken the preference of Alexei for his favourite. The efforts of the boyards were crowned with success all the sooner because Nikon despised their petty intrigues, and especially because Alexei himself began to grow tired of his dependence on the unyielding patriarch. Soon Alexei showed coldness in his intercourse with Nikon, followed by an open rupture, in consequence of which Nikon voluntarily quitted his charge.

On one occasion, when Teimooraz, sovereign of Georgia, was entertained at the Moscovite court, and, contrary to the usual custom, Nikon was not invited there (1658), the patriarch sent to inquire the reason. Whereupon the boyarine Mectrov, exasperated, drove the messenger out of the palace and beat him with a stick. The enraged patriarch first demanded redress by writing, but he could obtain no positive answer. Then he endeavoured to have a personal interview with Alexis after service in church. But the boyarine Romodonovski came to announce that Alexis would not be present. Nikon was highly incensed. He flew into a storm of passion, and scolded the boyarine, who, in turn, reproached the patriarch with pride. Nikon could bear that no longer, and gave full vent to his fury. After the liturgy, he, with a loud voice, intimated to the people that he was no longer patriarch of Moscow. He placed his pastoral staff near the image of the Vladimirski Virgin, put on a simple monk's attire, and finally, in the vestry, wrote a letter to Alexis, begging him to indicate a cell as a suitable retreat. Nikon, seated on the steps of the estrade, awaited an answer. Twice Alexis sent the boyarine Troobetzkoi to exhort Nikon, but in vain. A third time the boyarine came and intimated to Nikon that he had the sovereign's



permission to choose a dwelling for himself. Nikon evidently hoped that Alexis would come to have a personal interview, to persuade his friend, and in no wise awaited such an answer. Accompanied by a great crowd, Nikon then went on foot from the Cathedral of the Assumption (at the Moscow Kreml) to the cloisteral dwelling of the Voskresenski, and immediately afterwards to his favourite Voskresenski monastery, better known by the name of 'the New Jerusalem,' built by himself.

Alexis, however, did not soon decide the affair concerning his former friend. During several years their dispute was still prolonged, and the quarrel was eagerly fomented by the boyards. It was, moreover, also prolonged by Nikon's unflinching obstinacy. Finally, a Clerical Council was assembled, under the presidency of two Eastern patriarchs, those of Alexandria and of Antioch. Nikon was then judged and condemned. He was deposed and exiled as a captive to the Bielozerski Ierapontov monastery (government of Novgorod), 1666. After his fall, he, notwithstanding, did not lose courage, but even till his death still showed an unbending disposition.

In Soloviev's larger *History of Russia* (vol. ii. pp. 332-335), he gives curious details of Nikon's captivity. The once powerful, arrogant patriarch greatly missed the comfort and even the luxury to which he had become accustomed during the days of his prosperity. Alexis used to send various articles from time to time to his former friend. Among these articles were different kinds of fish, dried fruits, preserves, and also fur to line a pelisse. Nikon, however, wrote, while returning thanks for these gifts, that there was too little fur for the desired purpose, and that in his actual abode there was no opportunity to buy more fur. He accordingly begged Alexis to send an additional supply, which the latter did.

The books corrected by Nikon were approved by the same council which had deposed him from the dignity of patriarch. Notwithstanding, in spite of this approval, many priests and monks would in no wise consent to make use of these newly-corrected books. At the Solovetzk monastery (government of Archangel) this affair led to open revolt. But the government, then occupied in the south by quelling Razine's insurrection, could not send large forces to the north. Thanks to the strong walls of the monastery, the 'Raskolniki' maintained a siege during the protracted space of eight years. Only in 1676 (22nd January) the voevode Mesherinov took the monastery by assault and hanged the chief rebels.

## CHAPTER LXXVIII

THE LITTLE RUSSIAN QUESTION—BOGDAN HMELNITZKI AND THE ANNEXATION OF  
LITTLE RUSSIA TO THE MOSCOVITE STATE, 1654

DURING the first years of Alexei Michaelovitch's reign, a new and very serious revolt of the Ukraine Cossacks against the Polish aristocracy took place. This terminated by the separation of Little Russia from Poland and the annexation of the former to Moscow. The leader of this popular insurrection was Bogdan Hmelnitzki, urged to a desperate struggle with the Poles by a thirst for personal revenge.

Zinovius Hmelnitzki, better known by the name of Bogdan, was the son of a Cossack centurion. Bogdan received a good education for the time, and soon began to advance from the circle of his associates, the town Cossacks, by his bravery and his talents. He also speedily distinguished himself in battles with the Tartars, the Turks, and Moscovites. Finally, he occupied the post of a military scribe. Although outwardly Hmelnitzki professed entire submission to the Polish republic, notwithstanding, some of the pans (nobles) who oppressed Ukraine, taught by experience of previous Cossack revolts, began to look with an evil eye on the clever scribe. He was especially hated by Tschapleenski, under starost of Tschigeerine. Not far from that spot, Hmelnitzki possessed a farmhouse named Soubotovo, to which the under starost laid claim. On one occasion, Tschapleenski, with a crowd of followers, attacked the farmhouse, set fire to the corn in the barn, and seized Bogdan's wife. Hmelnitzki was forced to save himself by taking flight. He then complained to Konetzpolski, starost of Tschigeerine, but on receiving no redress, next went to Warsaw to seek justice from the Polish senate. However, in any law-plea between a petty Polish noble and a Cossack, judges usually took the part of the former. Hmelnitzki finally applied to the king, who knew Bogdan personally and protected him. But Vladislav felt his want of power in the diet, and accordingly declined to participate in the affair. As for Hmelnitzki's complaints of the oppression exercised on the inhabitants of Ukraine, it is said that the king simply replied: 'The Cossacks have a sword!' Whereupon Hmelnitzi went to join the Zaporog Cossacks, excited them to revolt, and received aid from the Crimean khan. The Cossack Rada (assembly) chose Hmelnitzki as hetman, and resolved to declare war on Poland. In all Ukraine great agitation took place; for the people only awaited a suitable opportunity to rise in arms once more against their oppressors.



The first encounters of Hmelnitzki with the Polish forces at Joltaia Voda, or Yellow Water, and at Korsoom, 1648, terminated in complete defeat of the Poles. These successes raised all Ukraine. Bondmen formed numerous gangs of robbers, who plundered whatever they could find, and laid the castles of their masters in ruins. These marauders also set fire to Romanist churches, and put Jews—renters of estates—to a cruel death. The pans were forced to flee from the fury of the populace. At that epoch King Vladislav died; and the interregnum which ensued still more favoured the success of the insurrection. When the deceased sovereign's brother, John Casimir, was finally elected king, he, in person, took command of the troops. But at Zborovo, in Galicia, the Poles were on every side surrounded by Cossacks and Tartars. Then the king consented to peace, by which the old rights of the Cossacks were renewed, besides the grant of many new privileges.

However, the treaty of Zborovo did not prove permanent. According to its stipulations, the number of 'enregistered Cossacks' was limited to 40,000. The remaining bondmen, forming part of the troops, were obliged to return to the condition of serfs, and to work for those very nobles who had been but recently expelled from their possessions by the enraged people. When the hetman by strong measures tried to enforce these statutes, great discontent against him was manifested by the populace of Ukraine, so that he was finally forced to abandon his attempts. On the other hand, the Poles also did not perform some promises of the treaty. For example, they did not give the metropolitan of Kiev a place in the senate. Hmelnitzki again summoned the aid of the Crimean khan, and again began a new war. But this time it was unfavourable to him. John Casimir assembled a large force. In a battle at Berestesek, the khan suddenly abandoned the Cossacks, and they were completely overthrown. At Belaia Tserkov (*i.e.* White Church), government of Kiev, a new peace was concluded, by which the number of 'enregistered Cossacks' was diminished to 20,000. The position of Little Russia then became the same as it was before the insurrection. The Cossacks, and especially the peasants, moved in whole crowds towards the adjacent Moscovite Ukraine, where vast tracts of hitherto unpopulated country were soon peopled by Little Russian colonies and villages.

On seeing the impossibility of struggling alone against Poland, Hmelnitzki, even at the beginning of the insurrection, had carried on conferences with the Moscovite court, and begged Alexei Michaelovitch to take Little Russia under his protection. After the treaty at Belaia Tserkov, Hmelnitzki, with great perseverance, renewed his entreaties; while he added that, if reduced to extremity, he was ready to submit to the Turkish sultan. The Moscovite government at

first enacted the part of mediator between the Cossacks and Poland, and demanded the fulfilment of the treaty of Zborovo; but the Poles rejected that demand. Besides, one constant subject of dispute between the governments of Moscow and Poland was the diminishing of the Russian sovereign's titles. This was particularly apparent in intercourse with commanders along the frontier lines.

In order to decide the important questions concerning Poland and Little Russia, Alexei Michaelovitch held a meeting of the states-general (*Zemskaia Dooma*) in 1653. In this assembly it was decided to accept the proposals of Hmelnitzki and to declare war on Poland. During the following year, a pompous Moscovite embassy, at the head of which was the boyarine Bootoorline, arrived at Periaslavl. There a general Cossack 'Rada' also assembled, and, at the hetman's proposal, the Cossacks swore allegiance to the sovereign of Moscow, 8th January 1654.

Little Russia  
annexed to  
Moscow, 8th  
January 1654.

Subsequently, Moscovite functionaries went to the Ukraine towns, and received the oath of allegiance from Little Russian armies on both sides of the Dnieper. The chief conditions of annexation were as follows:—The number of permanent troops was estimated at sixty thousand. The Cossacks themselves had the right to choose a hetman, entitled to receive foreign ambassadors. The privileges of towns and of petty nobles remained as before. In towns the administrators were to be Little Russians, and they were to collect revenues.

## CHAPTER LXXIX

### STRUGGLE WITH NEIGHBOURS ON ACCOUNT OF LITTLE RUSSIA

THE war which then broke out with Poland was very favourable to the Moscovites. Alexei Michaelovitch, with numerous forces, joined the campaign. In person he besieged Smolensk and forced it to surrender. From White Russia the Moscovites advanced to Lithuania and took Vilna, Kovno, and Grodno. At the same time, Hmelnitzki, strengthened by imperial forces, attacked the Poles from the south-east, and advanced towards the Vistula. To complete the misfortunes of the Poles, they were also attacked from the north by the warlike Swedish king, Charles x., who subdued Poznane and took Warsaw and Cracow. In this critical position, Poland was saved by the intervention of the Austrian court, and also by the rivalry which existed between the Russians and the Swedes. The ambassadors of the Emperor (Ferdinand III.) gave Alexei Michaelovitch the hope that at the death of the childless Casimir the Poles would elect the Moscovite sovereign as



king of Poland. Thus the latter state would be annexed to Moscow without war. Alexis then agreed to a truce, while he retained for himself both Little and White Russia (1656). He next turned his arms against the Swedes, as stronger, more dangerous neighbours than the Poles.

Thinking that the time had come to advance towards the shores of the Baltic Sea, Alexei Michaelovitch entered Livonia, took several towns there, and besieged Riga. But at that city the Russians met with a check. The war was then continued with varying success. Meanwhile, conferences took place. They terminated by the peace of Kardis (1661), by which the Russians returned all conquered towns to the Swedes. Moscow was prompted to make these concessions on account of sedition in Little Russia, and renewed war with Poland.

Zinovius Bogdan Hmelnitzki had, with great displeasure, learned the cessation of war between Moscow and Poland. He died some months after the truce had taken place. In Little Russia, sedition immediately ensued. The chief cause of it was the election of a hetman. This depended on the free choice of the Cossacks. There were always several candidates for the said dignity, and, of course, each had his own party. Besides, the annexation of Little Russia to the Moscovite state was not yet permanent. Meanwhile, the simple Cossacks and the populace were favourable to union with Moscow; but the elder Cossacks, and especially those in office, showed preference for the Polish aristocracy.

Even during Bogdan's life, the Cossacks chose his successor in the person of his young son Youree. But soon after Bogdan's death, the general scribe Veegovski, with the aid of his partisans, seized the hetman's staff of command.

Concerning Veegovski's election, the following narration is recorded:—

'On pretext of friendship for the deceased hetman, Veegovski urged Youree Hmelnitzki at first to refuse the hetman's dignity, and only to accept it after repeated entreaties. This proceeding apparently very much pleased the Cossacks. Veegovski also promised to resign his post as general scribe if Hmelnitzki did not continue hetman. A Cossack "Rada" was appointed at Tschigeevine. Thither assembled the commanders, each with several Cossacks of his army. Veegovski liberally treated the Cossacks to a good dinner and abundance of corn-brandy. He thus gained their good-will by his hospitable reception. On this occasion, the "Rada" assembled in a court adjoining Hmelnitzki's house. When a considerable number appeared, the gates were shut, and a large crowd remained beyond them. Youree Hmelnitzki, in reality, resigned his former dignity, placed on a table the ensigns of his office, *i.e.* a staff of command and a mace, and then left the house. Next came Veegovski, who also resigned his post of general scribe, placed on a table an inkstand, the token of his occupation, and then went away. The

Cossacks shouted that they would once more elect Youree; but the latter continued to decline the proposal on account of his youth and inexperience. Whereupon some of Veegovski's partisans proposed that Youree should remain hetman; but that, while he was at school, Veegovski should command the armies. The scribe demanded time for consideration of the subject. Three days then elapsed, after which the "Rada" once more assembled and elected Veegovski as temporary hetman.'

Veegovski betrayed Moscow, and in a secret treaty with the Poles (at Godiatsch) promised to restore Little Russia to Poland. But a considerable number of Cossacks, who had joined the Moscovite vovodes, rose in arms against Veegovski. The hetman, aided by the Crimean khan, defeated his opponents at Konotop (1659), but, being abandoned by the khan, was finally obliged to flee to Poland. After Veegovski, the hetmans followed each other in rapid succession—Youree Hmelnitzki, Teteria, Brivohovetzki. Meanwhile, Little Russia was divided into two parts, one on the left, the other on the right bank of the Dnieper. The inhabitants of the former sided with Moscow, while the latter sympathised with Poland.

During this interval, as the Poles did not observe the conditions of a treaty of peace, Alexei Michaelovitch was forced to renew war with Poland. That second Polish war was, however, unfavourable to him. A great part of conquered regions in Lithuania and in White Russia again fell into the hands of the enemy. Fatigued by a protracted struggle, both states held conferences; and finally, the boyarine Ordeen-Nashokine, a famous Moscovite diplomatist, concluded a truce of thirteen years with Poland (1667) at the village of Androosov, near Smolensk. By that truce, Moscow retained Smolensk, the left bank of the Dnieper in Little Russia, and, besides, the town of Kiev, for the space of two years. But that ancient city was never returned. The western part of Ukraine was again assigned to Poland.

However, with the conclusion of the war, sedition did not terminate in Little Russia. The hetman of the western regions, the bold and ambitious Doroshenko, seized the eastern side also; for there the people were discontented on account of new imposts imposed by Moscow. Doroshenko thought to form all Little Russia into his own domains, and then to seek protection from the Turkish sultan. But on the left bank the adherents of Moscow soon gained the ascendancy. They chose Samoeelovitch for their hetman. Meanwhile, general danger on the side of Turkey urged the Moscovite and Polish governments to unite in forming a defensive alliance against a powerful enemy. The western side of the Dnieper, whither the sultan twice came with large forces, suffered terrible devastation.



Only the victory of the Polish king, John Sobieski, elected to fill the throne in 1674, saved Poland from utter humiliation. The struggle with Turkey and the Little Russian question were, however, both yet undecided, at the epoch when Alexei Michaelovitch passed away (1676), January 29, in his forty-seventh year.

1676—Death  
of Alexei  
Michaelo-  
vitch, 29th  
January.

During the latter years of this sovereign's reign, his personal friendship was particularly shown to the boyarine Artaman Sergéevitch Matvéev, who possessed great influence at court, and who, at the same time, was remarkable for his enlightenment and his partiality to European customs. The latter, at this epoch, gradually began to appear among the higher classes of Russian society.

Matvéev was son of a secretary, and, after Athanasius Lavreortievitch Ordeen-Nashokine, became ambassador. His influence was also much felt during the decision of affairs in Little Russia. Matvéev's position at court was still higher, when Alexis, at the death of his first consort, Marie Meeloslavski, married Natalia Kirilovna Nareeshkine, a relative of Matvéev's, and brought up at his house.

Through Matvéev's influence, dramatic representations began to take place at court—'Comedians' Acts,' as they were then called, and directed by a foreigner named Yagan Godfrid. The subjects of these pieces were taken from sacred history. In 1673, in Yagan Godfrid's house, there was a theatrical school in a part of Moscow still named 'The German Market.' By Matvéev's orders, twenty-six boys, sons of citizens, attended the school.

Soloviev remarks, in his smaller *History of Russia* (p. 219), that Matvéev, probably on account of his insignificant origin, only obtained the rank of boyarine towards the very close of Alexei's reign, although so long previously possessed of his confidence. As we have already remarked, Matvéev was essentially a man of progress. His house was furnished in the European style, adorned by pictures, clocks, etc. But the most important change in Matvéev's domestic life was, that guests came not only to eat and especially to drink, as was then generally the case, but to hold rational conversation also. Matvéev's wife was, besides, not shut up like a captive. She received her husband's visitors and entertained them.

Perspective drawing was among other arts introduced in Russia by Matvéev.

Feodor Michaelovitch Rtischev, chamberlain of Alexei, was another individual to whom this sovereign showed preference.

Near Moscow Rtischev founded a monastery (now the Andréevski almshouse), and there, from among the Little Russian monks, organised a learned brotherhood and a school. In that monastery Rtischev sometimes passed the whole night in conversing with learned recluses. He likewise built an almshouse at his own

expense. On selling one of his estates, he diminished the price on condition that the new proprietor would promise to treat the peasants well. Rtischev bestowed land on the town of Arzamas (government of Nijni-Novgorod), knowing that its inhabitants were in want, but had not means to procure what was necessary. While on his death-bed, Rtischev implored his heirs to be kind to their peasants.

Alexei Michaelovitch, by his first consort, Marie Meeloslavski (who died March 1669), had a large family. His eldest son Alexis died at the age of sixteen (1670). Two remaining sons were Feodor and Ivan (John). The daughters were Marfa, Sophia, Catherine, Mary, Theodosia, Anna Eudoxia, and another princess whose name is not recorded.

In a curious and now very rare work, entitled *Description of Moscow during the Reign of Alexei Michaelovitch*, by an Englishman, Dr. Collins, at the court of Alexis, a strange statement is made—namely, that great complaints were uttered because Marie Meeloslavski had too many daughters. On that account, there was even on one occasion question of shutting her up in a cloister, and of choosing another Czarine.

The second consort of Alexei Michaelovitch was Natalia Kirilovna Nareeshkine (unmarried in January 1671). Her children were Peter the Great, born May 30, 1672, and two daughters, Natalia and Theodora. The latter died in 1678.

## CHAPTER LXXX

### REIGN OF FEODOR ALEXÉEVITCH, 1676-1682—CHANGES AT THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE NEW REIGN

1676-1682. THE new sovereign was a pupil of Simeon Polotski,<sup>1</sup> and had received a very good education for the times. Feodor Alexéevitch, however, was only fourteen years old and of remarkably delicate health. The question accordingly arose: 'Who would obtain his confidence?' Meanwhile, different parties began to be in a state of agitation. As we have already seen, the individual in whom Alexei Michaelovitch had most confided was Artaman Sergéevitch Matvéev. But

<sup>1</sup> Simeon Polotski was a learned monk from White Russia, to whom Alexei Michaelovitch had confided the education of his sons. Polotzki was an indefatigable author. He wrote against the Raskolniks a work entitled *The Rod of Government*, 1688. He besides composed eulogies in verse as well as sermons and even dramatic pieces, the subjects of which were generally derived from sacred history. Polotzki likewise collected many foreign works containing ancient and modern rules for morality, sentences, maxims, descriptions of vice and virtue, and translated them into Russian verse, in order that they might thus be more attractive and easily committed to memory.



Matvéev was the nearest to Feodor's stepmother, Natalia Kirilovna, and her son, the Czareevitch Peter. Matvéev was accordingly hated by the relatives of Alexei's first consort, the Meeloslavskies and their friends. Thus, when a son of Mary Meeloslavski occupied the throne, the other Meeloslavskies and their like-minded partisans seized the opportunity to overthrow Matvéev. He was accused of the 'black art' and negligence of the sovereign's health. First, he was sent in exile to Kazane, and then to Poostozersk (government of Archangel), besides being deprived of property and the rank of a boyarine. It was in vain that the old man wrote to Feodor and to different nobles, compared his own fate to that of Belisarius, and implored Feodor to imitate the goodness of the emperor Titus. Matvéev, too, added that he had been condemned without judgment, and had not once been confronted with his accusers. He also stated that he and his son could nowhere in Poostozersk buy bread for two 'dengii.' Notwithstanding, only towards the close of Feodor's reign the fate of Matvéev was alleviated. He was removed from Poostozersk to the town of Looch (government of Kostroma), and one of his estates was restored to him. The dying Nikon had also permission to be removed from Bielo-ozero (government of Novgorod) to the Voskresenski monastery, but he expired on the way, and when he had reached Yaroslavl. The Meeloslavskies, however, did not after all succeed in obtaining the most prominent posts during the brief reign of Feodor Alexéevitch. They were occupied by Yazeekov and Lichatchev.

#### WAR AND TRUCE WITH THE TURKS, 1676

While these changes were going on at court, war still continued in the south with Doroshenko, against whom Prince Gregory Romodonovski and the hetman Samoilovitch marched before Tschigeeerine in 1676. Doroshenko, seeing the impossibility of defending himself, surrendered Tschigeeerine, and resigned the hetmanship; but the affair did not even then terminate, for the Turks did not wish to give up Ukraine. In August 1677 a Turkish force of forty thousand<sup>1677.</sup> men besieged Tschigeeerine. The besieged defended themselves with the courage of despair, and, meanwhile, Prince Romodonovski and the hetman Samoilovitch hastened to their deliverance. The Turks and Tartars could not prevent these auxiliary forces from crossing the Dnieper, and were defeated by them on one side, while on the other the besieged evacuated Tschigeeerine. During July of the following year (1678) twice the number of Turks again besieged Tschigeeerine. Once more Romodonovski and Samoilovitch marched to its aid, but on that occasion could not prevent the Turks from destroying Tschigeeerine by excavations. Finally, at the commencement of 1681, a truce of twenty years was concluded

at Bachtshisaria with the Turks and Tartars, by which Russia ceded to Turkey western Ukraine, the previous domains of Doroshenko, reduced to utter devastation. The remainder of Ukraine and the Zaporog districts were, however, permanently assigned to Moscow (1681).

The protracted war on account of Ukraine had totally ruined and depopulated south-western Russia. Samoil Velitchko, at the commencement of the eighteenth century, *i.e.* at the epoch of war between Peter I. and Charles XII., while, along with Cossack forces, traversing Volhynia and collateral Ukraine (on the western side of the Dnieper), thus expresses himself in his annals:—

‘I saw many towns and castles depopulated and with ruined walls, where formerly the labour of human hands had filled hill and dale, but which now are only refuges for wild animals. The walls of Constantinov, Berditchev, Zbaraj, Sokola, and others which we traversed during our march, contain but a few poor inhabitants. Other spots are empty, ruined, mouldering, overgrown with grass; only serpents and different reptiles find shelter there. I saw the extensive fields of collateral Ukraine, the wide valleys, woods, spacious gardens, beautiful oak forests, rivers, ponds, lakes, all deserted, covered with moss and reeds. Is this the same Ukraine which the Poles called “The Paradise of Poland”? Before Hmelnitzki’s war, Ukraine was indeed a second “land of promise, a land flowing with milk and honey.” I also saw in many spots human skeletons, dry, bare, and having only the sky as a covering.’

#### ABOLITION OF ANCIENT FAMILY RIGHTS, OR STRIFE FOR PRECEDENCE

After the expedition of Tschigeeerine, another important question arose regarding the reorganisation of the forces. We already saw that during the reign of Michael Feodorovitch, not only were foreigners invited to adopt military service in Russia, but certain armies were formed of Russians who had learned the foreign art of war. It now became necessary to reorganise all Russian forces. At the beginning of 1682 Feodor Alexéevitch intrusted that important undertaking to Prince Vasili Vasilievitch Golitzine and certain other chosen military functionaries. The latter thereupon suggested various alterations. Among them was the absolute necessity of abolishing ancient family rights, or strife for precedence; and this was deemed expedient not only in the army, but in embassades, in fact everywhere, so that each, from great to small, should unconditionally be in the position assigned him by the sovereign. On January 12 an assembly was summoned, consisting of the higher clergy and members of the council. Their opinion was then read aloud. Feodor Alexéevitch likewise added that the devil himself had sown a strife for precedence in the hearts of



the Russian people, from which great evil in everything had ensued, and from which armies had suffered defeat in battle; that his grandfather, his father, and he, too, had done much to eradicate this evil. Then Feodor asked the assembly, 'Should this strife for precedence be abolished, or should it remain unnoticed and continue as before?' The patriarch Ioachim answered that strife for precedence was the source of all evil, therefore he, along with the whole clergy, knew not how to thank the sovereign for his intention to eradicate it. The secular members of the assembly next added that they agreed with the patriarch. Whereupon Feodor Alexéevitch ordered the books of the nobiliary to be brought forth, and said: 'For the entire eradication and eternal oblivion of all petitions and notes concerning precedence, let us order these books to be committed to the flames.' Those present replied: 'May that God-hating, brother-hating strife for precedence perish by fire, and may its memory remain no more at all for ever.' The books were then burned. Feodor Alexéevitch next intimated that he would order some genealogical books to be compiled, in which certain families were to be inscribed according to their distinction.

This strife for precedence was so universal that sometimes, while the enemy was actually before the walls of a town, the troops within refused to march under command of the chief voevode because his ancestors had been less famous than those of others in the army.

The following curious details we quote from Ilovaiski (pp. 196-197):—

'At the Moscovite court a strife for precedence was the cause of frequent disputes. For example, when the sovereign gave a dinner to the members of the council, they were seated according to the degree of their distinction; but all of a sudden it happened that one boyarine would not sit lower than another, and then began to petition the sovereign to decide the difference. Whereupon the sovereign ordered the refractory boyarine to be seated by force. The boyarine, however, scolded and stormed at his rival, screaming the while that although the sovereign ordered his very head to be cut off, he would for nothing in the world sit lower than another. Finally, he crept below the table. The sovereign next commanded the noisy boyarine to be dragged forth and taken to prison. Besides this punishment, for a similar offence others were added in form of beating with sticks or flogging from the knout. At length the quarrelsome boyarine, from a decree of the council, was sentenced "to deliver up his head to his adversary," according to the expression of the times. The ceremony of "delivering up the head" was as follows. Two officials seized the disputant by the arms, and led him to a court near his rival's house. The three above mentioned were accompanied by a secretary or clerk. The disputant was

finally placed at the lower steps of a staircase. The master of the house then came to the stair. Whereupon the secretary or clerk intimated that the sovereign had ordered and the other boyards had decreed the sentence concerning this boyarine, namely, that he should 'deliver up his head.' The house master returned thanks for the sovereign's favour, and then liberated the humiliated rival, gave the secretary or clerk presents, and finally went next day to do obeisance to the sovereign.

'As far as the strife for precedence was concerned, the boyards manifested extreme obstinacy for a particular reason, or, in other words, not only did one individual acknowledge himself of inferior position to another, but his whole race, too, occupied a lower place than that of his successful rival. Consequently, in service, the posterity of one family was placed on a lower footing than that of others.'

#### THE SLAVONIAN GREEK AND LATIN ACADEMY

During the reign of Feodor Alexéevitch was organised a higher institution or academy. A monk named Timothy, on his return from Greece, told Feodor of the sad position which the Greek church occupied in the East from want of instruction among the clergy. Then Feodor resolved to organise an institution where thirty children were assembled from all ranks. Feodor next wrote to the patriarch, beseeching him to send to Moscow teachers well instructed in Greek, Latin, and in science. Above all, it was requested that these teachers should be firm adherents of the Greek faith. Feodor also desired that this institution should be like other European academies. Statutes were then issued for the new institution. In them, Feodor stated that, like Solomon, he had ascended the throne while still young, and desired nothing more earnestly than to obtain heavenly wisdom—the parent of a sovereign's duties, the origin, the protector of all prosperity. The superior or director of the academy could only be Russian or Greek, and the latter received the patriarch's certificate of belonging to the Greek church. Individuals of all conditions and ages were permitted to acquire learning at the academy, but none were allowed to have teachers of foreign languages at home, though all who wished to send their children to the academy could do so. The pupils who there successfully finished their studies were appointed to posts in accordance with their merits, and, being considered particularly well educated, obtained the sovereign's special favour. All learned foreigners who came to Russia were subjected to an examination at the academy, and only those approved by it were received into the service of state. The academy was, moreover, obliged to observe that any of a different



religious creed did not propagate it among members of the Greek church. The director, besides, remarked the conduct of all foreigners who embraced the Greek faith. The director and teachers also paid special attention that no books prohibited by the church were circulated among the pupils. All convicted of blasphemy against the Greek church were given up to be judged by the director and the teachers, and if the accusation was in reality true, the criminal was condemned to be burned alive. In this wise the Moscow Academy, although a secular rather than an exclusively clerical institution, was, notwithstanding, founded with an intention to preserve the church intact from foreign teaching.

Feodor Alexéevitch lost his son, Elias, and his consort, Agafia Simeonovna Grooshetskaia, in 1681. Notwithstanding the feeble health of the young sovereign, Yazeekov persuaded him to contract a second matrimonial alliance with Marfa Matvéevna Apraxine. That took place in February 1682; but after the marriage Feodor's illness increased, and he died on April 27 of the same year, aged twenty.

1682—Death  
of Feodor  
Alexéevitch.

## CHAPTER LXXXI

### GENERAL VIEW OF THE MOSCOVITE STATE—DEFINITION OF THE MOSCOVITE STATE

By the name of the Moscovite state was comprised a north-eastern principality, including the territories of the Moscow princes, augmented towards the east by vast regions, subsequent to the conquest of three empires, *i.e.* Kazane, Astrachan, Siberia. It, however, happened that not all the Russian people, and not all Russian districts, were under the sway of the Moscovite sovereigns. For many still belonged to Poland and to the Grand Princes of Lithuania. Accordingly, the words Russia, Russian, the Russian Empire, were rarely used. It was only in the titles of the Moscovite sovereigns that these words signified the union of all Russian districts as natural and proper, although for a time violated. The reigning Prince of Moscow entitled himself Autocrat, Great Sovereign, Czar, and Grand Prince of all the Russias.'

Certainly the Poles were in no wise pleased with these titles, and tried to alter them when the peace of Polianovka was concluded; but in Moscow none consented to do so. Nay, more, Alexei Michaelovitch, after successful war against Poland, took the additional title, 'Autocrat of all Great, Little, and White Russias.'

As we have already remarked, contraction or incorrect enumeration of the

imperial titles in documents was a fruitful source of dispeace between the Poles and Russians of that epoch, who, in intercourse with all foreign powers, insisted that the titles of their sovereign and the names of the various districts over which he ruled should be minutely and exactly enumerated.

Besides the conquest of Kazane, Astrachan, and a great part of Siberia, annexation of Little Russia, with the districts of Kiev and Sieversk, had much augmented the geographical extent of Russia. Its boundaries at this period were as follows: At the north, the Northern and part of the Frozen Ocean; towards the east, the vast regions of Siberia; at the south, the possessions of China, the lands of the Kirgees, the Nagai Tartars, the Crimean horde, and the Turkish empire; towards the west and the north-west the boundaries of Russia often altered, but, from the reign of Michael Feodorovitch, Russia was separated from Poland and Lithuania by the Dnieper, and from Sweden by Ingermanland and Carelia. Accordingly, Russia, with its Siberian territories, comprised two hundred and sixty thousand geographical square miles.

#### INTERCOURSE OF MOSCOW WITH THE EAST AND WEST

The Moscovite state, situated at the extremity of Europe and near the boundaries of Asia, was, of course, far removed from other countries which took part in European history. Moscow was, moreover, constantly repulsed from the west by the inimical states of Poland and Sweden, possessed its own religious belief, was occupied by onerous internal affairs, and, above all, was hampered by poverty of means. In a word, for these different reasons, the Moscovite state could not yet be enumerated among other European countries. But towards the east Moscow triumphantly issued in a struggle with the weakened, ruined Tartar horde. Moscow was, besides, much more powerful than its eastern neighbours. It was opposed neither by Kazane, Astrachan, nor even by Siberia. Moscow had only difficulty in repulsing the Crimean robbers, for it was separated from them by vast steppes, and was besides forced to pay an annual tribute to the khan in order to prevent his inroads. But if Moscow was more powerful than its eastern neighbours, uncultivated barbarians, it was, notwithstanding, weak compared with western states, more skilled in the art of war. For this reason it was that in the history of the Moscovite state we observe that it constantly extended towards the east, but suffered defeat at the west. Only during the reign of Alexei Michaelovitch, in consequence of the annexation of Little Russia and successful war with Poland, Moscow made acquisitions towards the west, and then was also obliged to encounter immediate collision with Turkey.



THE SOVEREIGN

At the head of the Moscovite state was the sovereign autocrat, possessed of unlimited power over his subjects. Supreme power, thus invested in Moscow, has indeed a great and peculiar historical signification. It represented political union by combining scattered, petty principalities into one state, and thus formed a compact mass of different races dispersed in the plains of eastern Europe. Moscovite autocracy gave the Russian people a solid political organisation which enabled them to become victorious during the long struggle with eastern and western neighbours, who had profited by the enfeebled condition of the country during the epoch of the appanaged princes.

It is remarkable that among the Slavonian races the Russians alone have maintained independent development and have formed a mighty nation.

The posterity of appanaged princes and nobles, poor in means, could not oppose the gradual concentration of power around Moscow. They were not long permitted to remain rulers of districts or commanders of armies, because military expeditions were brief and voevodes were often changed. These poor nobles lived in Moscow. They had their own houses near the palace of the Kreml, and were constantly before the sovereign's eyes. Every morning they came to bow down before him, then they went again after dinner to vespers. These nobles, in writing, styled themselves 'bondmen of the sovereign.' The least important, in presenting him petitions, wrote their names with contractions. The most distinguished, until the epoch of John the Terrible, retained permission to write their entire names, but then all began to use contractions. The most distinguished dignity was that of boyarine. Then came the Okolnitchi, or individuals near the sovereign, from *okolo*, near. The higher nobles, admitted to the state council, 'Dooma,' were called 'Doomni nobles.' Sons of the highest families began their service at court as Spalniki (*spal*, to sleep), gentlemen of the bedchamber, or as Stolniki (from *stol*, a table), gentlemen of the table. The spalniki were, however, considered more honourable, because nearer the sovereign's person. They in turn slept in his room and served him. The stolniki, during state dinners, presented dishes to the sovereign and his guests. The sons of the most distinguished individuals, after being spalniki, were immediately created boyards; others, less remarkable, were made okolnitchi. In important circumstances the sovereign summoned a council (dooma) in order to deliberate on the best measures to be taken. The council was composed of boyards, okolnitchi, and doomni nobles. If the sovereign wished to consult with them concerning any secret affair, he assembled only those nearest his

person, *i.e.* boyards and okolnitchi, who had received that rank after being spalniki. - In the most important cases, the patriarch and other high clergy were likewise summoned to the council. John the Terrible began to summon members from other conditions. These councils were denominated Sobori. They were of frequent occurrence during the reign of Michael, when the state still suffered after the devastation of the 'troublous times,' and made constant appeals to the states-general and to the people for necessary supplies. At the commencement of Alexei's reign, assemblies also took place, but as the state became more powerful they were no longer required.

Ilovaiski (p. 199) remarks that the greater part of Russian boyards' families are descended chiefly from foreign immigrants—Lithuanian, German, and especially Tartar moorzas (princes). The celebrated Russian historian, Karamzine, is said to be of Tartar origin. His ancestor was Kara Moorza.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that aristocracy formed a select circle or caste, nearly inaccessible to other classes. According to their distinction, however, the boyards were formed into several grades, from the position they held at court, in the civil administration, or in the army.

A middle degree was formed by the nobles ('Dooriani'), and a still lower, very numerous class consisted of 'the boyards' children' (militia of princes and nobles), but these again were subdivided into several sections.

It is in the following terms that foreigners who visited Russia, such, for example, as Herberstein and Anthony Possevin, describe the unlimited power of the Moscow Grand Princes (Ilovaiski, pp. 198-199):—

'The Russians are convinced that their sovereign directly executes the will of Heaven; hence the frequent expressions in common conversation, "It is decreed by God and the sovereign," "God and the sovereign know." As for the Grand Prince, he considers as his own particular property not only districts, but everything contained in them.'

Herberstein bears witness to the zeal with which the Russians served their sovereign. 'I saw,' says Herberstein, 'one of the most distinguished Moscovite functionaries, who had formerly been ambassador in Spain. He was an old man. He met us as we were on our way to Moscow. He rode forward on horseback, took all manner of trouble, and exerted himself like an ardent youth. The perspiration was actually streaming from his face. When I expressed astonishment at his energy, he exclaimed in a loud tone, "Ah, Baron, we do not serve our sovereign in your fashion."'

Subsequent to the reign of John the Terrible the boyards endeavoured to



make use of the tumult during the 'troubulous times,' in order to restrict the sovereign's power and to augment their own. They guided Vāsili Shooiski, and dictated conditions when the Polish king's son Vladislav was elected sovereign of Moscow.

According to some authorities, although not quite authentic, such, for example, as that of Kosheehine, Michael Romanov was elected to fill the vacant Russian throne on certain stipulations, and that he did nothing without the advice of the boyards; but during the period that his father, the patriarch Philaret, administered affairs these stipulations were forgotten, in consequence of the hatred the people felt towards an aristocracy of boyards, and the general preference for monarchical power. As for Alexei Michaelovitch, he already ruled with absolute sway. In presenting petitions the Russians used to compare their sovereign to God Himself; but Feodor Alexéevitch, in simplicity and Christian humility, prohibited this.

'The Moscovite princes were surrounded by numerous courtiers. The latter were composed of individuals belonging to the higher classes, whose rank or honour depended on the greater or less proximity to the sovereign's person. In general, the Moscovite court was distinguished by Oriental magnificence, along with strict performance of certain ceremonies.<sup>1</sup>

'The special honour shown to the sovereign demanded that all should approach the palace on foot, after leaving horses and conveyances at a particular distance. The right of freely entering the palace was assigned only to court dignitaries, and even for them, according to their distinction, certain restrictions existed. Not all who appeared at the sovereign's court could unrestrainedly penetrate to every apartment of the palace. The boyards, the okolnitchi, the doomni nobles, and others near the sovereign in that respect enjoyed great preference. They might penetrate directly even to the higher chambers, *i.e.* those occupied by the sovereign himself. There, as usual, they daily assembled at the entrance (hall), and awaited the Grand Prince's exit from the interior apartments. The nearer boyards, after "biding their time," went finally into the room or cabinet of the sovereign. For the others the upper chambers were quite inaccessible. The stolniki, striaptschi (officers-in-waiting), courtiers, colonels of strelitz, head officials, secretaries, and others in service, generally assembled at the staircase of the bedchamber, the only spot in the palace where they could come at any time with entire freedom.'—*Domestic Life of the Russian Sovereigns*, Zabeline.

<sup>1</sup> After successful war with Poland, Alexei Michaelovitch entitled himself 'Autocrat of Great, Little, and White Russias.'

## SECRETARIES

'All business in a written form was transacted by secretaries of the council, or state secretaries, simple secretaries, and copyists or clerks. In the Moscovite state strange opinions existed, according to which distinguished individuals surrounding the sovereign's person considered themselves exclusively destined to the military calling, and despised the service of the pen as less honourable than that of the sword. The former would, in fact, have been degrading to them; and however important the position of state secretary in reality was, distinguished persons did not adopt it. Secretaries were usually sons of priests or of traders.' (Soloviev, p. 225.)

## PETTY NOBLES

The middle class of nobles and the 'boyards' children' were obliged to serve all their lives where the sovereign indicated. Their chief duty was military service. In return for it these petty nobles, besides money and corn wages, also received land and hereditary property. The former was only a life-rent; the latter was entire possession, and became the inheritance of posterity. Meanwhile, as the 'boyards' children' formed the classes of petty nobles and proprietors, the boyards themselves and some noble families concentrated vast possessions in their hands, and sometimes owned several thousands of peasants.

The individuals liable to be taxed, or to pay imposts, were the inhabitants of suburbs and peasants. The former consisted of population in the neighbourhood of towns—traders who paid dues to the treasury of the crown. In order that its revenues might be collected constantly and regularly, the population of suburbs was obliged to remain in one spot, as peasants were bound to the soil. The more considerable among the suburban population were styled 'better people,' while the others were called 'less.' In administrative point of view, these classes were enumerated by hundreds and by villages. Besides paying dues, these inhabitants of suburbs were obliged to send to the sovereign's service various individuals as functionaries and sworn men.

In towns there existed special higher ranks of traders, namely, so-called 'merchant-guests,' 'hundreds of merchant-guests,' and 'cloth hundreds.' From among them an overseer named a 'head' was appointed, in order to collect various dues for the crown, such, for example, as those at the custom-house, from pothouses, and at the 'sable treasury.' In case of loss or arrears, these 'heads' supplied the deficiency from their own property. Therefore their service was sometimes ruinous. But, on the other hand, they enjoyed certain rights and



privileges, such as to possess inhabited land. These higher commercial grades were filled by the very richest from the so-called 'black hundreds' (of the common people), both in Moscow and in other towns (Ilovaiski, p. 201).<sup>1</sup>

### PEASANTS

With regard to land, peasants were divided into three classes. First, those who lived on ground belonging to the sovereign; second, those who inhabited land of individuals in service; third, those occupying land belonging to monasteries or to the clergy in general.

The first were again subdivided into two classes—the 'Dvortzovi' (*dvor*, a court), who paid to maintain the court; the second were peasants of so-called 'black districts,' or 'black ploughs,' who paid dues to the treasury of the crown, for there was also a tax on the number of ploughs employed by one household.

As we already saw, towards the close of the sixteenth century peasants lost the right of freely removing from one spot to another, and were annexed to the soil. But they did not soon become accustomed to that change. Accordingly, removing continued for long afterwards. Even the very act of annexation was neither complete nor unconditional; for in some instances, according to subsequent ukazes, peasants were permitted to remove from one petty proprietor to another. After the lapse of five years a proprietor had no longer the right to reclaim a runaway bondman and to bring him back again. Subsequently, however, the rights of serfdom were more developed. Michael Feodorovitch protracted the term from five to ten years for fugitive bondmen to return to their former master. But, according to the 'Oolojenié,' or 'Code of Alexei Michaelovitch,' that term was abolished entirely. Peasants, with their families and posterity, belonged to the land on which they were inscribed, according to books dating from 1626.

Proprietors, meanwhile, gradually began to extend their power over peasants, so that the latter could with difficulty obtain justice from their masters. During the second half of the seventeenth century, nobles already sold peasants and gave them as part of a dowry, without land, and at the close of the same century the peasant was little better than the property of his owner. Sometimes, however, peasants themselves voluntarily became bondmen in order to avoid paying taxes to the crown, as the latter did not exact payment from bondmen.

<sup>1</sup> According to a Russian historian, Kaeedanov (p. 80), so-called 'boyards' children' and 'princes' children' were the militia of princes and nobles. This was at a remote period of Russian history, i.e. from 1224 till 1462. At a later epoch (from 1613 till 1682) the above-mentioned author (p. 207) states that 'boyards' children' formed a middle class between noblemen and peasants. These 'boyards' children' served under the jurisdiction and command of boyards. They served as military, and performed other duties.

Constant removals and flight in a thinly populated country became evils keenly felt in the Moscovite state. Fugitive peasants and bondmen often went to the Don or to the Zaporog Cossacks, or hid in forests and formed gangs of highway robbers. During the whole course of the seventeenth century government was forced to carry on an incessant struggle with that great evil. Emissaries were sent in all directions to seek out fugitives. They were brought back to their master, and highway robbers were hanged.

#### REVENUES OF THE CROWN—ARMIES

The small amount of population, compared with the vast extent of country, as also the hitherto feebly developed condition of trade and commerce, caused the revenues of the crown to be small. In fact, they were insufficient for a state constantly enlarging, especially when protracted, expensive war was carried on, such, for example, as took place during the reigns of Michael Feodorovitch and Alexei Michaelovitch. The revenues of the crown amounted to one million three hundred thousand roubles, besides the so-called 'Siberian treasury,' or, in other words, fur sent from Siberia. In modern times the income of the Russian empire varies. In 1888 it amounted to nine hundred and twenty-two millions, with an expenditure of eight hundred and eighty-seven millions.

An important source of revenue to the Moscovite state consisted in tribute levied not on individuals, but on whole communities, who shared the tribute among the different members. The population of suburbs paid by the number of houses inscribed in a book for each suburb. Nearly all merchants and traders were liable to pay tribute. Besides the ordinary dues, there were constantly collections made for the extra wants of the government, such, for example, as money to ransom prisoners from the Tartars, and named 'prisoners' money.' At times there were also express collections for military expenses. Among them the most considerable were the furnishing of warriors along with provisions in war, the supply of post-horses for ambassadors and imperial functionaries, the repairing of forts, building of the crown bridges, etc. In general, the financial system of the Moscovite state was confused, and levied unequally on various conditions of the people and on different parts of the principality.

Many inhabitants of suburbs and so-called 'black plough peasants,' by pledging themselves to private proprietors, or by joining the strelitz or Cossacks, thus avoided paying imposts to the state. Meanwhile, town and country communities were obliged to pay the part of these fugitives, which thus became very onerous, so that not a few were ruined, while a deficit took place in the treasury. On the other hand, from the custom of ancient Russian princes, who granted monasteries



and even private individuals' property exempt from taxes, this still more increased the inequality with which they were levied.

Land granted to those in service was insufficient to maintain them. Thus during a campaign they received pay. Expenditure for the maintenance of forces was yet more increased when, during the seventeenth century, the necessity of hiring foreign soldiers was felt. Then also were formed armies of Russians instructed in the foreign art of war. Those armies even bore foreign names, such as riders, dragoons, soldiers. But that was only the commencement of a new order of things.

The mass of the armies was composed of courtiers, who did not lose their original military signification of militia. For all those 'spalniki' (gentlemen of the bedchamber) and 'stolniki' (grand masters of the table) of the sovereign formed an army or guard. Then there were nobles and boyards' children besides 'town Cossacks.' All these were military who usually lived at their own property, but assembled in event of war. The strelitz, forming the garrisons of towns, fulfilled the duty of police-officers, lived with their families in separate suburbs, and during leisure from service carried on different trades. Along with the artillery were gunners, who also lived in separate suburbs. In addition to these ordinary forces, during war there were recruits and volunteers. These were enumerated not by persons but by households. So, too, were strelitz and soldiers. Finally, along with the Moscovite forces were Cossacks—those from the steppes of the Don and the Terek. Tartars also formed an addition to the forces. The military went to war with firearms, cross-bows, and helmets. By universal testimony the Moscovite armies defended towns much better than when fighting on the open field. That arose from want of skill in the art of war, and likewise because the mass of the forces was not constantly under arms.

#### JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION

The form of judicial administration was at first simple and uncomplicated in Russia. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, in the judgment of viceroys and governors of districts were to be found 'starosts' (bailiffs) and 'sworn men,' elected from among town and country communities, and generally known as 'judgment men.' During the reign of John the Terrible (1533-1584) many communities obtained the right of self-judgment, *i.e.* they were judged by their own chosen members. But subsequently they lost that right, and judgment was invested in the hands of district commanders. Judicial administration was essentially verbal. The chief proofs in judgment were written documents, witnesses, and oaths. In criminal cases a general investigation concerning the

crime took place among inhabitants of the spot, or of any suspected individual. The ancient ordeals of water and iron we no longer find. In their stead the cruel custom of judicial torture was introduced. The following were some forms of torture:—Needles were pushed under the nails of the accused, or they were hung over a fire and thus slowly roasted. Sometimes also they were beat with whips on the bare back, or the head was shaved and cold water poured over it.

#### PUBLIC OFFICES

The administration of justice was concentrated in so-called public offices or *Preekazii*. The sovereign constantly gave orders to one of those near him to administer one particular affair, or several of the same sort, or perhaps some entirely different. Those so chosen had helpers in the persons of secretaries and clerks. Therefore a 'public office' was formed. However, as the 'office' had its own expenses, they were defrayed by contributions collected from those who paid taxes in the towns to which the office belonged. As the state became more powerful, the administration of each new affair occasioned the organisation of another public office, so that the number of them was constantly increasing. Towards the second half of the seventeenth century there were above forty public offices. At the termination of a law plea, he who gained it received a so-called 'right document.' The right of judging serfs, save in capital crimes, belonged to the proprietor himself. In the tortures and modes of execution then prevalent, we remark the rudeness and cruelty of the times. The usual means of execution were hanging, quartering, breaking on the wheel, and impaling. The most frequent punishments for other offences were the whip and the stick, from which not even boyards themselves were exempt. The creditor of an insolvent debtor had a right to place the latter 'in dstraint,' or to beat him with sticks for some hours every day till he paid his debt. Proprietors, instead of exposing themselves to this punishment, usually sent their serfs to be 'dstrained.'

#### COATS-OF-ARMS

During the epoch of the appanaged princes each of them had his own crest or coat-of-arms, amongst which, in course of time, and on the decay of the appanaged system, the most important crest was that of the Moscovite princes—*i.e.* a red shield on which a knight on horseback pierces a dragon with a pike. From the time of Ioann III., 1462-1505, on the occasion of his second marriage to a Greek princess, Sophia Paleologa, 1472, the crest of her family was finally adopted as that of all Russia—*i.e.* on a gold field a double-headed black eagle with outspread wings, and crowned with two crowns.



Alexei Michaelovitch ordered the Russian crest to be the said double-headed eagle with raised wings, and crowned with three crowns. On the eagle's breast was represented the crest of Moscow, properly so-called, or a red shield on which St. George is seen piercing a dragon. In the present crest of Russia the double-headed eagle has only two crowns.

#### NATURAL PRODUCTIONS OF RUSSIA—TRADE AND INDUSTRY

European travellers of the fifteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries represent the Moscovite state as a vast level region, thickly covered with pine and birch forests, and in all directions traversed by large navigable streams. The soil of the country was (and still is) sandy in some spots, but generally productive, and yielding abundance of all belonging to a temperate zone. From the great extent of Moscovy its climate was unequal. Regions near the capital of the state were remarkable for pure healthy air. What especially attracted the attention of foreigners was the marked contrast of nature during summer and winter. While the latter prevailed terrible cold was felt, and the whole country was shrouded with a thick covering of snow. On the contrary, during summer, after the melting of snow and the frequent inundation of rivers, forests, meadows, and fields revived and soon were covered with luxuriant green, while the heat of summer became as great as the winter's frost.

The chief productions of the country were as follows:—Agriculture caused various kinds of grain to grow in abundance. The culture of bees was likewise extensive in woody Moscovy, and thus furnished a considerable quantity of honey and wax. The rivers abounded in fish, and the forests were full of game. Hunting of wild animals was also important, as thereby many kinds of valuable fur were obtained, such as those of different foxes, sables, squirrels, and ermines. The best furs were taken from Siberia to the districts of the Petschora and of Perm. Notwithstanding, all these natural productions were so little worked, that they yielded the inhabitants scarcely the most necessary articles. Agriculture was at a considerably low degree. Its progress was hindered by the scanty population, and by the development of serfdom, which was a bad encouragement for the labour of peasants. According to the testimony of foreigners, although corn was at a low price, the latter was variable. From the mismanagement of householders in villages, famine often took place. Then it also was that rich individuals who had heaped up an extra store of corn took the opportunity to sell it at as high a price as possible. The great centre of trade in the Moscovite state was the capital itself, *i.e.* Moscow. Even its very appearance denoted an

essentially commercial character. It was full of markets, courts to accommodate so-called 'merchant guests,' as well as trading rows and shops. In that city were also to be seen traders from many European and Asiatic nations. The sovereign himself also took immediate part in trade. From Moscow the commercial movement was extended in different directions—along the Volga, in Lithuania, in Novgorod, and at the White Sea.

Towards the east by the Oka and the Volga was the way to Astrachan. In that capital there constantly lived merchants of different nations, such as Persians, Bokharans, Armenians, etc. They traded chiefly in silk and cotton textures. On that way lay the important harbours of Nijni-Novgorod and Kazane. From Nijni to Astrachan, in spring and in autumn, there were annual caravans of vessels belonging to the crown and to private merchants. However, their course in sailing was not without danger. The whole lower current of the Volga presented one vast desert country, in which caravans were often attacked by gangs of robbers, and became their prey in spite of a convoy consisting of a detachment of strelitz. From the Volga upwards, along the Kama, was the principal way to Siberia. In that direction corn and military stores for those in service were transported to Siberia, while from it, by the same way, were imported valuable furs. The chief commercial spots in western Siberia were Verhotoorié (present government of Perm) and Tobolsk. During the second half of the seventeenth century individuals in service, along with Russian traders, penetrated further and further towards the east. They levied tribute on the native tribes, erected small forts, and thus extended the boundaries of the Moscovite state to the shores of the eastern ocean and to the lower current of the Amoor. Then began trade with China, and Nertschinsk became an important spot in that commerce. In a western direction from Moscow, to Lithuania and Poland, the chief way was through Smolensk. From Poland the best horses were brought for the imperial stables. Towards the south-west, from Turkish domains, Greek merchants sometimes came to Moscow with ornaments for women, harnesses for horses, and different kinds of fruits. However, the direct road to Moscow was by no means without danger to these traders on account of the Zaporog Cossacks. For that reason merchants chose another way by Polish possessions. The most commercial towns of south-western Ukraine were Kiev and Pooteevle (government of Kursk). Southern nomad races, such as the Nogai Tartars, brought towards the territories of the Moscovite state large droves of horses, which, for the greater part, were bought for the imperial stables.

Towards the north-west was the way to Novgorod and to Poland. During the reign of John III., 1462-1505, the commerce of Novgorod with the Hanseatic



towns nearly ceased. It was renewed during the reign of Vasili III.,<sup>1</sup> but no longer on a scale so extensive as before. The opening of the way to the White Sea by the English, the devastation of the old city by John the Terrible, the troublous times, the loss of the Baltic shores, one after another, ruined the prosperity of Novgorod. Notwithstanding, during the seventeenth century Novgorod and Pskov were still among the number of the richest and most flourishing of Russian towns. To them came chiefly Swedes and Germans. From these cities was the way to go abroad, as also to the ports of Narva and Riga.

The most important way to the White Sea from Moscow was by the commercial towns of Yaroslavl and Vologda, then by the river Sochona to Oostiog, and further by the Northern Dvina to the port of Archangel. The first foundation of that town—by the name of Novi-Holmogor—was in 1584, the year when John the Terrible died. But after the destruction of Novi-Holmogor by fire, a new town was built (1657) called Archangel, from an adjacent monastery dedicated to the Archangel Michael. Trade with that town made the Russians acquainted with England, and, in general, with western Europe. In London a commercial company was formed named 'The Russian Company.' From the second half of the sixteenth century, European vessels, with different articles of trade, came to the port of Archangel. At first exclusive privileges were enjoyed by Englishmen, who organised trading companies in various interior towns of Russia. But in that respect they were gradually rivalled by other merchants, such as Dutch, German, and French. Moreover, as we already saw, during the reign of Alexei Michaelovitch, 1645-1676, the English were deprived of the right to trade in every spot free of duty, and were limited to carry on commerce in Archangel alone.

From western Europe Russia imported articles made of metal, cloth, linen, wine, herrings, sugar, cotton, firearms, gold and silver money, different spices, etc. The custom-house officials usually selected the best articles of commerce, and bought them for the sovereign. These articles were partly used at the imperial court, and partly destined for sale. From Russia foreigners exported raw materials, the most considerable of which was fur. Then followed wax, honey, leather, tallow, caviare, flax, hemp, and different kinds of grain. Russian traders rarely went with their goods to western Europe. In fact, such journeys were unfavourably regarded alike by the Moscovite government and by foreign merchants.

'On one occasion a native of Yaroslavl went with various furs to Amsterdam; but the Dutch made an agreement with each other and bought nothing from the

<sup>1</sup> 1505-1533.

Russian. In this wise he was forced to return to Archangel with his wares. There the very same merchants bought all his goods at a high price. From their own confession they acted so to prevent Russian traders from going abroad.' (Ilovaiski, p. 211.)

As far as interior trade was concerned nearly each suburb served as a market for its neighbourhood. The great distance between towns, and the difficulty of communication, induced merchants generally to assemble at certain spots, and to form fairs. These fairs generally took place at the same period as church festivals, and were held near the church. The fairs at the property of monasteries were particularly remarkable. In general, merchants went more willingly there because peasants on church land were richer than those elsewhere, and also because custom-house officials interfered less with trade on the ground of monasteries. Amongst these fairs the most celebrated was the Makarievski, near the cloister of Saint Macarius Jeltovodski (at the yellow waters).

Among the Russian traders of the seventeenth century we meet with so-called 'companies,' *i.e.* several individuals combined their capital for commercial undertakings.

In Siberia, trade was thus especially carried on. Some petty traders and commercial peasants from districts had 'pedestrian companies,' or hawkers, who carried about articles of commerce. For example, these 'pedestrian companies' sent hawkers to sell images in the Ukraine towns.

Foreigners who visited Russia spoke of its inhabitants as a people essentially inclined to trade and to industrial activity. All remarked the extraordinary address and skill of Russian merchants, although they also possessed a bad quality, injurious to trade—in other words, a want of honesty (see Ilovaiski, p. 112). The habits of asking several times more than the real value of an article, swearing that it was at a low price, in a word, deceitful practices, were much in vogue among Russian traders. Such peculiarities showed the want of enlightenment, and the corruption of the national character. Another circumstance had also injurious influence on trade. In all the chief markets, Russian merchants suffered detriment from contact with imperial articles of commerce. For example, if a merchant appeared at Archangel, he could not begin to sell till all the imperial articles were sold, and they consisted of the best, selected purposely for the sovereign. In fact, some branches of commerce were exclusively in the hands of the crown, such, for example, as expensive furs, the sale of corn-brandies and other articles. In general, trade in the Moscovite state had very limited freedom. At every movement goods were subjected to minute inspection, and numerous duties were paid for them. Some were, however, abolished, or changed for others, by Alexei



Michaelovitch. Besides, merchants often suffered offence from voevodes or state officials. Some too, who even themselves belonged to trading companies, did not hesitate to harass merchants, and to take bribes.

Fletcher, the English ambassador at the court of Feodor Ioannovitch, remarks in his *Description of Russia* that a Russian merchant, on unpacking his goods, used to look carefully and timidly around, to see that no imperial functionary was near, as the latter chose the best goods gratis, for the sovereign's trade. Ilovaiski, however, adds (p. 112) that Fletcher, as a foreigner, did not understand many peculiarities of Russian life, and hence often depicted what he saw in gloomy colours.

Means of communication, from one spot to another, at that remote epoch, were of course in a primitive state. The usual time for travelling was in winter. Then the roads between large towns, such, for example, as Moscow and Yaroslavl, were covered with long lines of sledges, filled with merchandise. Sometimes from seven to eight hundred sledges were seen. In summer the chief means of communication consisted in rivers. But sailing on them was accompanied by difficulty, on account of frequent low water, so that the goods were often placed on trucks. At that epoch, canals were yet unknown in Russia. Finally, trade in general suffered not a little from highway robbers.

As far as manufactories were concerned, they were but little diffused in the Moscovite state at this period, and those which did exist were, for the greater part, in the hands of foreigners. At the imperial court of Moscow many foreign artisans constantly lived. Among them were casters, gold and silver smiths, etc. Gradually they formed in Moscow a whole colony, established at a spot which still bears the name of 'the German village.' During the seventeenth century we meet with cloth and linen manufactures, but they were exclusively for the imperial court. The first foundry for cast-iron was organised near Toola, by a Dutch merchant named Vinioos. That took place during the reign of Michael Feodorovitch (1613-1645). Subsequently, a Hamburg merchant, Marcellius, organised other foundries on the rivers Kostroma, Sheksna, and Vaga. During the reign of Alexei Michaelovitch (1645-1676) were founded the ironworks of Olonetz. There cannons were cast and firearms made.

#### MONEY

Several kinds of money were at this epoch current in Russia. They were silver and copper coins belonging to Moscow, Tver, Pskov, and Novgorod. Two hundred coins were equal to one rouble. The latter now contains one hundred kopecks. At first these coins were not struck, but were simple pieces of silver

representing money. The Russian rouble was worth two ducats. Small copper money was called 'poolii.' On the Novgorodian coins the Grand Prince was represented, seated on a throne, and before him a man bowing his head. On the coins of Pskov a human figure, half-length, was seen with a prince's crown. Others, struck at a later period, had the impression of a bull's head, crowned. On the Moscovite coins was a rider on horseback, sometimes with a sword, and sometimes with a pike, piercing a serpent. The coining of money was intrusted to private individuals; but they were obliged to add their name to the coin. Alexei Michaelovitch restricted the right of coining money to the crown alone, and founded 'the Mint' in Moscow. There, by his orders, silver roubles and half-roubles were struck, bearing the crest of all Russia.

#### ARTS AND SCIENCES

The genius of civilisation and enlightenment in Russia, delivered from the Tartar yoke, began to revive, to act and to aim at perfection. During the reign of John III., 1462-1505, some productions of the fine arts appeared. Artistic activity in Russia, as formerly, chiefly consisted in erecting and adorning churches. For besides their religious signification, they in fact served as the only means for diffusing a taste for the fine arts among the masses of the people. Nearly all important constructions were executed under the inspection of foreign architects, who, from the time of John III., were constantly obtained from Italy and Germany. These architects erected the walls of the Moscow Kremlin, several of its halls, and also the cathedrals of the Archangel Michael and of the Assumption. Aristoteli Fioraventi of Bologna was the architect of these buildings.

According to Karamzine, from the testimony of Italian annals, there were two architects, Rudolpho Fioraventi and Alberto Aristoteli, though in Russian annals these names are confounded and given to one individual.

The following details are mentioned in annals, concerning the reconstruction of the Assumption Cathedral, chief among the hallowed spots of Moscow (Illovaïski, p. 213):—

'The metropolitan Peter, on removing from Vladimir to Moscow (1323), begged the Grand Prince, Ioann Danilovitch Kaleeta, to erect a stone cathedral in honour of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin. "If thou wilt listen to me," added Peter, "thou wilt become more glorious than all other Russian princes, and thy race shall be mighty. This town will be more famous than all other Russian towns. Prelates shall dwell in it. Its hands will weigh heavily on the shoulder of its enemies, and my bones shall rest in it."'

Accordingly, the cathedral was founded in 1326, and completed during the



following year. Saint Peter (of Moscow) did not survive till the completion of the sacred edifice. He was interred in one part of the church. But the latter began to fall to ruin about a hundred and fifty years afterwards. Moreover, it was too small for the gradually growing population of Moscow. So the Grand Prince Ioann III. ordered it to be demolished, and rebuilt on a much larger scale, after the model of the Vladimirski Cathedral of the Virgin, founded by André Bogoliobski (the Pious). The walls of the new building already reached to the roof, when suddenly the whole erection fell down, from the instability of the material, and the inexperience of the builders. Then the Grand Prince sent to Italy, in order there to seek for a good architect. The latter was found in the person of Aristoteli Fioraventi. Masons to build the new cathedral were taken from Pskov. The roof was made by Novgorodian workmen, and covered with 'German' iron. The Assumption Cathedral (Oospenski Sobor) was erected by Aristoteli during the space of three years—or five, according to the archimandrite Joseph in his *Guide to the Remarkable Spots and Hallowed Localities of Moscow* (p. 3). At last, in 1479, it was terminated and consecrated by the metropolitan Herontius. The interior painting of the walls (alfresco), was completed during the reign of the following Grand Prince Vasili Ioannovitch (1505-1533). After a great fire which took place in Moscow, John the Terrible (1533-1584) ordered the domes of the cathedral to be covered with sheets of gilt copper. Michael Feodorovitch, while restoring Moscow after the devastation of the Poles, ordered the walls of the cathedral to be painted anew, on sheets of plated gold, in this wise: from the old painting an outline was made, which then was placed on the same spot. The image-painting of the cathedral was again renewed during the reign of Catherine II. (1762-1796), and after the devastation of the French in 1812, while Alexander I. occupied the throne. In the Assumption Cathedral repose the remains of the metropolitans and patriarchs of Moscow. Next in importance to the 'Oospenski Sobor' (Assumption Cathedral) is that of the Archangel Michael, the patron saint and guardian angel of the ancient Russian princes. The Archangel Cathedral was also first built by Kaleeta (1333), but renewed by John III. (1462-1505). In that sacred building are the tombs of the ancient Grand Princes and sovereigns of Moscow. In the latter capital there were already not a few artisans, both foreign and native. Pskov was famous for its masons; Novgorod, for its carpenters, carvers, and painters. However, they were insufficient. John III. already forbade any Livonian prisoners to be sold in Lithuania (if they knew a trade), and ordered them to be brought to Moscow. As far as architectural taste was concerned, the influence of the Byzantine style, during the fifteenth century, gradually began to give place to that of western Europe. But in painting, the Byzantine taste

1479—  
Assumption  
Cathedral  
rebuilt.

continued to prevail much longer. Besides images, remembrances of it are still preserved in the miniature designs in manuscripts of the lives of saints, copied and illustrated by monks in monasteries.

In ancient Russia, the art of painting images was considered a sacred work, and was under immediate inspection of clerical power. Traditions concerning image-painting were carefully transmitted from one generation to another. Russian image-painting was divided into three principal sorts or schools, *i.e.* the Novgorodski, the Strogonovski, and the Moskovski. The Novgorodian style of image-painting is chiefly preserved in old churches of Novgorodian districts. They, more than others, retained the Byzantine style. The Strogonovski school, named from its protectors, the rich merchants Strogonov, was chiefly diffused in north-eastern towns. The images of that school, compared with others, are distinguished by beauty of execution and brilliancy of colours. The representative of the Moscovite school was a monk of the Trinity cloister, named André Rooblev (fifteenth century). Subsequently, in Moscow, there was a so-called 'Imperial School of Image-painting,' placed under inspection of the public office for armour. During the second half of the seventeenth century the representative of that school was the well-known Simeon Ooshakov. The best image-painters were always summoned from other towns to Moscow; so, in that city, there gradually appeared some difference in the manner of designing images. Besides, Moscow image-painting was, to a certain degree, influenced by foreign artists, summoned to Russia by Michael and Alexis.

The 'Raskolniki,' or Old Believers, along with the 'new' or corrected church books, also rejected 'new' images, *i.e.* those not painted according to the ancient manner. The Raskolniki too, in church service, would not adopt the ordinary singing, borrowed from Greece, but continued to sing in a monotonous tone, with nasal sounds, considered as the ancient Grecian style, and named 'Demestvenni.'

But in general, Russian art was in no flourishing condition at this period. The chief reasons why art was little developed in Russia were the want of general enlightenment and the poverty of the state. Luxury and magnificence were only to be seen in the capital, particularly at the imperial court, where were collected all the best home and foreign productions. So that while in churches of the capital and in imperial halls were to be found abundance of silver and gold vessels, adorned with precious stones, in simple rural places of worship the vessels were partly of pewter and partly of wood.

#### TOWNS AND VILLAGES

Towns, as previously, were generally forts, destined to defend the neighbouring



population from the enemy. Whenever government received news that the enemy had invaded any district, orders were sent to those in service to come from adjacent spots to towns, along with their families and provisions. Corn was hidden in ditches. Intimation was also given, that if any refused to come to towns, but meanwhile were made prisoners, they were themselves to blame for disobeying orders, and government would not ransom them.

Russian towns were generally divided into three parts. In the interior was the fort or kreml. The spots near the kreml were called suburbs, sometimes surrounded by a wall or earthen rampart. Beyond the suburbs (posadi) were the outskirts or villages on the highroad (slobode), so called on account of exemption from taxes, which exemption they enjoyed compared with simple villages. Not unfrequently these outskirts were named from the occupation of their inhabitants, such, for instance, as 'The Fish Village,' 'The Drivers' Village,' 'The Village of Strelitz,' 'The Cossacks' Village,' etc. Town walls were generally of wood. Only in more considerable towns they were of stone, with high battlements. At the walls were towers of two and sometimes of three stories, with openings for firing cannons or arquebuses. Around the walls were frequently placed double or even triple rows of posts, to render entrance into the town more difficult. At the south, frequently threatened by the Tartars, were earthen ramparts, with forests in defence. In that direction only forts were seen. Ordinary villages were rare.

The interior of towns, as previously, was occupied by buildings of the crown, such, for instance, as public offices, the voevode's dwelling, the granary of the crown, with supplies of corn for those in service. There were likewise the so-called 'dwellings of siege,' for neighbouring proprietors, who, during an inroad from the enemy, assembled in towns.

#### THE CHURCH

With the creation of the patriarchate, the power of the chief prelate of the Russian church was not increased, so that, in general, the condition of the church in the Moscovite state differed little from what it had been in ancient Russia. The choice of a patriarch, if the sovereign himself had no one in view, was made by lot, from among several candidates appointed by an assembly of the clergy in Moscow. In the event of any important circumstance connected with the church, a council of clergy was assembled. As the sovereign, in weighty state affairs, was wont to summon the patriarch and the higher clergy for advice, so also voevodes in towns consulted with the archbishop in important affairs. In the Moscovite state the higher clergy enjoyed the rights of interceding with secular power concerning the unhappy, of asking pardon for the guilty, or at least, for mitigation

of punishment. In towns, citizens oppressed by voevodes applied to the archbishop and begged his intercession. Priests were chosen by the parishioners, who presented a written testimonial to the archbishop, that the individual was a good man. If, by particular request, a proprietor obtained the nomination of a priest from among his own peasants, the children of the priest born before he entered holy orders remained peasants, but those born afterwards were free. As, during the sixteenth century, the Council of 1557 endeavoured to eradicate disorder in the church, so too, in the seventeenth century, the famous Council of 1667 decreed that on festivals none were to work or to trade, that priests were to instruct their children, and thus to prepare them to take orders. The same council also strongly condemned the ignorance of the clergy, particularly in the country. Diakons (under-priests) and priests were prohibited from leaving one church and going to another. Monks were likewise forbidden to rove about; supposed anchorites and fanatics were not allowed to wander in towns and villages. The clergy were not permitted to trade. The same council also changed a decree established in 1621, and decided that Romanists who embraced the Russo-Greek faith should not be baptized a second time.

In ancient Russia, during the course of years, monachism became much extended, and was important by its peculiar signification. In distant desert regions of the state, monachism aided the act of tilling the ground. Peasants, attracted by exemption from imposts, gladly settled on monastic land. There they cultivated the fields and transformed hitherto waste spots into blooming meadows. The greater numbers of monasteries at that epoch were also fortresses which, particularly during the 'troubulous times,' rendered great service to the state. During the period of the appanaged system in ancient Russia, the monks themselves chose the abbot. But in the Moscovite state abbots were sometimes nominated by a bishop, and, in the most famous monasteries, by the sovereign himself. First-class cloisters (Lavrii) were generally exempt from episcopal judgment, and were under the direct jurisdiction of the patriarch.

The frequent bequests of pious individuals, during several centuries, concentrated much property in the hands of monasteries. But piety alone did not prompt many thus to sacrifice their possessions. As monasteries were exempt from various imposts levied by the crown, not a few proprietors, in order to live more quietly, gave their lands to monasteries on certain conditions. In this wise, government was deprived of much ground which was necessary for distribution among the military. Also, in consequence of privileges granted to monasteries, government lost a considerable part of its finances. On the other hand, the possession of inherited land withdrew the attention of recluses from religion, and



induced them to think too much of secular affairs. Moreover, the wealth thus amassed also tended to corrupt monastic morals. While Ioann III. occupied the throne (1462-1505), the famous anchorite Nil Sorski, in the Clerical Council of 1504, raised the questions: 'Should a recluse possess land? Since he had renounced the world and the things thereof, should he not cease to have worldly cares? Should he not maintain himself by his own labour?'

Nil Sorski was supported by the recluses of Bielozersk (government of Novgorod); but the metropolitan, the bishops, and the eloquent Joseph Sanine, on that occasion, maintained the rights of monasteries. These questions were renewed during the reign of Vasili III. (1505-1533). The opinions of Nil Sorski were developed by two well known monks, Vassian Kosoi, and the learned Maximus the Greek. But Ioann IV. acted in a more decided manner than his predecessors. During his reign, in the 'Stoglav Council,' hierarchs and monasteries were deprived of the right of buying land without the sovereign's permission; and, during subsequent councils, it was forbidden to bequeath estates to monasteries in order to pay for masses to obtain the soul's repose.

In general, the education of the Russian clergy, at that remote epoch, was insufficient compared with its high calling. Parish priests, in distant localities, had but little instruction. In a word, they were more occupied by the care of procuring daily bread, than by instructing their parishioners. Karamzine even affirms that some priests actually could not read, and thus were obliged to learn the church-service by heart. Judicious individuals, even among the clergy themselves, not unfrequently expatiated on the ignorance of their brethren; while means to enlighten them were suggested in councils. Meanwhile, much ignorant, foolish, superstitious belief still existed among the people, such as confidence in charms, incantations, prognostics, etc. In many spots, heathen festivals and sacrifices were still religiously observed.

The great degree to which heathen superstition still prevailed, particularly where Finnish population abounded, is proved by a document of Macarius, archbishop of Novgorod, to the clergy of the Votzkaia Piatena, one of the five districts of Novgorodian territory, in 1554.

'I have been told,' wrote the archbishop, 'that in your neighbourhood many Christians have abandoned the true faith. They no longer go to church nor to confession, and pray to trees and stones. Many eat ordinary food during the Petrovski fast,<sup>1</sup> offer sacrifices to demons, and summon magicians to pray. The dead are not taken to parish churches for burial, but are interred under heaps of

<sup>1</sup> A summer fast of the Greek church. The said fast terminates on June 29, the day dedicated to the memory of Saints Peter and Paul, and is consequently called Petrovski.

earth in villages, and in presence of magicians. The latter are also summoned when a child is born, in order to give him a name, or to offer sacrifices beside the dead, to hateful demons, etc.' (Ilovaiski, p. 224.)

Thirteen years later, the successor of Macarius, the archbishop Theodosius, also addressed the same clergy and mentioned the same customs. The 'Stoglav Council' of 1551 likewise indicates various disorders among the lower classes of the Russian people. On some festivals, such, for example, as Saint John's Day (June 24), both men and women abandoned themselves to licentious games and performed different heathen rites. False prophets and prophetesses, with bare feet and disordered hair, went about in villages and narrated marvellous visions. But where Christianity had taken root, *i.e.* among the middle and higher classes, particularly also among purely Russian population, attachment to the Greek church and great piety were remarkable. One foreign ambassador of the sixteenth century speaks of the pious Moscovites with respect. 'Never,' says he, 'do they pass a church, a monastery, or even a chapel, but they immediately dismount from horseback, or descend from a carriage, fall on their knees, and three times pronounce the words, "Lord, have mercy upon us!" And, if they approach a church in which service is going on, they do not pass it without entering the sacred building and listening to the litany.'

After the so-called 'Jewish heresy,' the Russian church was more than once disturbed by strange teaching. In order to struggle against it, clerical councils were generally summoned. Thus, during the sixteenth century, the famous heresies of Matvei Bashkine and of Theodosius Kosoi took place. They denied the church dogmas concerning Jesus Christ. The lower clergy and the people, however, strenuously opposed any innovation: and we have already seen that the correction of church books during the time of Nikon occasioned the formation of a sect, 'The Raskolniks,' whose numbers at the close of the seventeenth century vastly increased.

As far as foreign races belonging to the Moscovite state were concerned during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the greater part of Finnish tribes at the north and east of Russia were idolaters, while Tartar regions adhered to the faith of Islam. Notwithstanding, thanks to the labours of some earnest preachers, Christianity began to spread among these races.

'The patriarch Nikon, himself of Mordovski origin, was especially anxious to Christianise and to Russify the Mordvii (an originally Finnish people, eventually inhabiting the neighbourhood of Kazane). With Nikon's benediction, Misael, archbishop of Riazane, zealously undertook the conversion of the Kasimov Tartars and the Mordovski race of the Mokshan. Travelling from one spot to



another, he preached Christianity, baptized heathens, cut down sacred groves, and burned wooden houses in heathen cemeteries. In this wise he converted some thousands. But in one Mordovski village the idolaters met the archbishop with bows and clubs. When he, clad in his clerical robes, began to urge the people to receive baptism, the Mordvii fired a shower of arrows, and the archbishop fell fatally wounded (1655). Above his tomb, in the Archangel Cathedral of Riazane, is still preserved his blood-stained mantle.' (Ilovaiski, p. 225-226.)

#### ENLIGHTENMENT

Many foreigners who visited Russia during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were astonished at the innate ability of the Russians, and their capacity for mental culture. But of course, from unfavourable historical circumstances, enlightenment in the Moscovite state was at a considerably low degree. From the thirteenth century, *i.e.* from the epoch of the Tartar yoke, Russia was at once estranged from Europe, while the Russian people held immediate constant intercourse with fierce Asiatic barbarians, who left deep traces on the organisation of government and on the customs of the people. On the character of the Moscovite state there was also reflected an influence of Byzantine traditions, the conductors of which were hierarchs, literature, and jurisdiction. These traditions, moreover, belonged to the latest period of Byzantine enlightenment, *i.e.* at the epoch of its decline.

Although during the second half of the fifteenth century the Moscovite state did begin to hold intercourse with European powers, that intercourse was, notwithstanding, long confined to diplomatic communication alone, as also the act of summoning foreign artisans for the service of government. Russians were not yet allowed to go abroad for instruction, and science was not protected by the higher classes in Russia. Moreover, the Moscovite clergy, constantly afraid of foreign heresy, looked with an evil eye on western Russian schools and on learned men in no wise opposed to Western ideas. In order to preserve the church from them, we have already noticed the Slavonian, Greek, and Latin Academy, organised during the reign of Feodor Alexéevitch. The first teachers of the academy were the learned brothers, Ioannikius and Sophronius Lichoodi. In that institution the pupils chiefly learned the Greek and Latin languages, as well as philosophy and theology. Subsequently, however, the Lichoodi, for some offence, were subjected to persecution and removed from the academy.

As there was a want of secular schools, monks and the learned clergy were, at this epoch, nearly the only teachers of the people. In mental culture, boyards and other nobles were but little superior to the lower orders. All education

consisted in learning how to read and write; and these arts were not attained by all boyards. The entire system of education consisted in terror and punishments. The rod was considered a necessary accompaniment to all teaching.

The more enlightened regions of the Moscovite state were towards the west, *i.e.* in the neighbourhood of Europe. Novgorod, thanks to its trade during a lengthened period, served as the chief means of communicating European civilisation to Moscow. But, towards the close of the sixteenth century, the ancient capital fell to decay. During the seventeenth century, Novgorod's place, as regards Moscow, was occupied by Little Russia, with its schools and printing-presses, its clerical authors and learned men, whose education took place at the epoch of the struggle against the union and Catholicism. Such were Smotritzki, Kopeestenski, Mogila, Gisel, and others. At the same time, the influence of Polish civilisation and Polish literature became greater. The constant arrivals of European tradesmen, merchants, officers, and ambassadors, could not be without influence on Russian society. During the seventeenth century, European customs, although feebly, yet perceptibly, penetrated the higher Moscovite circles. While Ordeen Nashokine administered Polish affairs, there appeared the first newspapers in Moscow—*courants*, in manuscript, although exclusively designed for the court. In them were inserted translations from foreign newspapers and communications concerning different events in Europe. Amongst the Russian boyards, the first to adopt the manners and customs of the west was Matvéev,<sup>1</sup> under whose inspection the first theatre was organised at the Moscovite court. In a previous chapter, we have already remarked that theatrical representations in Russia, as in the West, had originally a religious character. In Little Russia, so-called 'mysteries' or dramas were introduced from Poland. The subjects of these pieces were derived from sacred history. They were generally acted by the pupils of clerical schools. These pupils (Boorsakii) often went to the houses of rich citizens, and sang sacred verses under the windows. In return the boorsakii received money and eatables. During great festivals, the pupils used to carry about boxes of two or three rows in height, in which were shown representations of Christ in the Manger and other surroundings. In these boxes were also shown different dramatic scenes from the life of the people. The chief actors therein were frequently a poor gypsy, a cowardly Jew, a boasting Pole, and an audacious Zaporog Cossack. These were puppets, pushed about by wires, while the conversation or dialogue was maintained by two men behind the stage. In Moscovite Russia there were also street representations of puppets, as well as learned bears, etc.

<sup>1</sup> During the reign of Alexei Michaelovitch.



During the reign of Alexei Michaelovitch, German dancers and musicians were summoned to the Moscovite court. They asked the sovereign's permission to enliven his theatre. Alexei applied to his father-confessor for advice. The confessor replied that the German actors might perform at court, because the emperors of Byzantium had allowed such amusements. In presence of the imperial family and the Germans at the palace, several 'mysteries' were performed, such, for instance, as Judith cutting off the head of Holofernes, how Alhasuerus ordered Haman to be hanged, etc. The musical orchestra on these occasions was composed of Matvéev's own servants, taught by Germans. Alexei was delighted with these representations. He commissioned Matvéev to organise a permanent theatre, to send Russians as pupils to the Germans, to summon new actors from Germany. The best Russian 'mysteries' at the close of the seventeenth century were those of Simeon Polotzki and Dmitri Rostooski. (See Ilovaiski, p. 224-230.)

According to the same author, the most remarkable dramatic representation of that remote epoch was the so-called 'stove act.' It took place before Christmas in some large towns, in cathedral churches. During morning service, church servants, while singing sacred hymns, represented the Bible narration of three youths cast into a burning fiery furnace, but saved by an angel. The said 'stove' consisted of a wooden tower, lighted by inflammable grass.

Amongst the religious rites of that epoch was the magnificent procession of Palm Sunday, borrowed from Byzantium. The patriarch, seated on horseback, represented Christ entering Jerusalem on an ass. The sovereign himself held the horse's bridle. In front was transported on a cart a decorated willow-tree, around which were boys dressed in white, who sang hymns of thanksgiving.

#### LITERATURE AND POPULAR POETRY

The book literature of ancient Russia chiefly consisted in collections of manuscripts, which, for the greater part, have been preserved till our own times. Amongst those manuscripts the first place was occupied by *Precepts*, composed by fathers of the church. The *Precepts* were divided into reading for each day. Secondly were biographies of saints, belonging in general to the Russian and Greek churches. A remarkable *Great Martyrology* was collected by the metropolitan Macarius, a contemporary of John the Terrible. The *Petscherski Lives of the Fathers* were composed in Kiev during the fifteenth century. Then follow collections of Bible stories, rejected because not acknowledged by the church. The collections called *Bees* form a transition from religious to secular literature. They are generally divided into chapters of a moral tendency,



such, for example, as discussions on wealth, on poverty, on virtue, on malice, justice, etc.

In order to diffuse knowledge concerning universal history, *Chronographies* were composed, borrowed for the greater part from Greek annals. In these *Chronographies* were enumerated events from the creation of the world, and especially Byzantine events. To furnish information concerning ancient Russia numerous collections of annals existed. Sometimes extracts were made from annals in a regular form, *i.e.* from the reigns of succeeding princes. These extracts were considered as genealogical books. Sometimes also *Codes from Annals* were composed. The most remarkable *Code from Annals* was composed by order of the patriarch Nikon. During the fifteenth century, Moscovite annals assumed a particularly official character, and were written at the court of the Grand Princes. During the sixteenth century, annals began to replace a *Nobiliary*. In the former, secretaries inscribed the chief events at court, as also the acts of boyards in service. During the same century (sixteenth) appeared historical records of contemporaries. Such, for example, was Prince André Koorbski's composition on the *Reign of John the Terrible*. During the seventeenth century, annals nearly ceased, and records assumed a prominent place. The most remarkable records of that period were those of Abraham Palitzine, cellarist of the Trinity cloister. His records are entitled *Narrations of the Siege of the Trinity Monastery, and also of the Sedition then in Russia*. Soloviev calls Abraham Palitzine 'the good cellarist of the Trinity cloister, who liked so much to talk of himself.' Another curious contemporary composition is entitled *Concerning Russia during the Reign of Alexei Michaelovitch*, by Kosheehine, secretary of the Polish Public Office. Kosheehine's work was written in Sweden, whither the author fled from Moscow about the year 1654.

Written memorials of ancient Russia, and, at the same time, important materials for its history, are to be found in various documents, conventions, regulations, complaints of different epochs. The fullest collection of such acts is to be found in editions of the Archæological Commission, instituted in 1834 in order to print material for Russian history.

A valuable source of information for the history of Russia, its manners and customs, previous to the reign of Peter the Great, may also be found in the considerably numerous descriptions of foreigners during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The authors of these descriptions, for the greater part, visited Russia as ambassadors or travellers. Such, for example, were Baron Herberstein, Anthony Possevin, Fletcher, Adam Olearius, Baron Meirberg (Austrian ambassador at the court of Alexei Michaelovitch). Sometimes also foreigners who described

Russia were in the Moscovite or Polish service, such as Jacques Marjaret, a French officer of the guards of Boris Godoonov, and of the first false Dmitri; Collins, an English M.D. at the court of Alexei Michaelovitch; a learned Serb named Krijanitch; and others.

As for the history of south-western Russia from foreign sources, the most remarkable is *A Description of Ukraine*, by a Frenchman, Beauplan. From among Russian sources we find the annals of Velitchka, a clerk in chancery of the Little Russian forces, at the close of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries. From Polish sources, concerning the history of Lithuanian Russia, the most authentic are the *Chronicles of Streekovski* (sixteenth century).

During the seventeenth century a great want was felt of a complete history of Russia. That want was at first manifested in Little Russia. In Kiev, a collection of extracts was printed from annals and from other narrations concerning ancient Russia till the reign of Feodor Alexéevitch. The said collection was entitled *Synopsis* or *Abbreviation*. It is attributed to Innocent Gisel, archimandrite of the Kiev Petscherski cloister.

For a lengthened period—till the time of Lomonosov, reign of Elizaveta Petrovna, 1741-1761—that was the only elementary work on Russian history;.

Secular or essentially light literature in ancient Russia consisted of a great many stories or novels, which formed the favourite subjects for reading or verbal narration, and, like more serious works, were also to be found in manuscript collections. Many of these tales are evidently of foreign origin, frequently borrowed from the East, from the *Arabian Nights*, or from the West by means of Poland; sometimes too from Italian chivalrous romances. But the tales were generally rewritten in Russian style. Many edifying legends also took the form of novels. Some of them are satirical stories, in which popular wit exposes the weak side of social existence. Such, for example, was a narrative entitled *Shemiakine's Judgment*, a satire on unjust, greedy judges.

Towards the close of the seventeenth century there appeared a feeble commencement of the independent Russian novel of romantic character.

Meanwhile, as books furnished the mental food of those able to read, and, on account of scarcity were only to be procured by the wealthy, the artistic wants of the people were gratified by numerous and varied songs, the productions of popular fancy and popular feeling. Amongst those songs, the first place was occupied by those of an epic character. The heroes of these epic songs appeared as knights. They personified a princely militia struggling with inimical neighbours, particularly Asiatic races. The latter are sometimes represented as countless hosts, or sometimes as fantastic serpents or other monsters. The

Russian knights generally assemble around the Grand Prince Vladimir, 'the Red or Beautiful Sun,' who entertains them at magnificent feasts, and then sends them forth to perform fabulous exploits.

At the princely feast the knight eats and drinks according to his immeasurable strength. To him is poured out

'A goblet of green wine, containing a pitcher and a half,  
And an ox's horn full of sweet wine, the third part of a pitcher'!

and the knight,

'Taking the goblet with his hand,  
Empties it at a single draught'!

The most famous among these popular ideal heroes are Ilia Moorometz (a peasant knight), Dobrinia Nikititch (a boyarine knight), and Alesha Popovitch.

Besides these princely epic songs, which chiefly originated in southern Russia, there were also others belonging to the north or to Novgorodian Russia. In the latter, along with the prince's court and militia, appears in the background the popular national assembly or Vietsché. The heroes of these songs are enterprising guests or independent Novgorodians. In general, these songs date from the epoch of appanaged Russia; yet they are preserved in the mouth of the people till this day.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in Moscovite Russia there were peculiarly 'imperial songs' which celebrated the reign of John the Terrible, his conquests, his feasts, his boyards. There were likewise songs concerning Alexei Michaelovitch, etc.

Meanwhile, in Little Russia a wide field was opened up for epic Cossack songs or 'doomii.' The subjects of these songs are the exploits of hardy Cossacks, and especially of favourite hetmen. These songs were composed by popular poets or mandore-players. At the same time, there also appear 'robbers' songs' in praise of Stenko Razine, or other famous atamans.

Along with epic poems may be classed those of a religious nature. The latter were chiefly sung by wayfarers or pilgrims. In such verses we remark a mixture of heathen belief and Christianity. One strange work, entitled *The Pilgrim's Book concerning the Final Judgment*, thus describes the origin of the world:

'White light is from the Lord;  
The beautiful sun, from the face of the gods;  
The bright moon, from the breast of the gods;  
The dark night, from thoughts of the Lord, etc.;  
Bright stars, from the garments of the gods.'



As far as the lyric songs of the people are concerned, many of them have a depressed, sad tone, an echo of monotonous struggle with life and a representation of rugged natural scenery, as well as the prolonged sufferings of the Russian people during various phases of their historical existence. Little Russian songs are especially distinguished for tender, melancholy feeling, while, on the contrary, those of Great or Central Russia have unbridled gaiety, showing an expansive nature, untiring activity, and thoughtless mirth.

One curious old song, 'Goré Zlotschastié' (Grief of the Unlucky), describes the struggle between good and evil concerning strong drink.

A promising youth leaves home without his parents' blessing. Then comes a wicked tempter in form of a demon, Goré. The latter entices the young man, so that he drinks away all his property and goes roving about the world. But even then he is not abandoned by the tempter. Whereupon the youth wishes to throw himself into a river. Goré, however, prevents him from doing so. The youth next tries to return home, but Goré intercepts the way. The constant pursuit, as is usual in popular songs, is represented in a poetic form :

'A bright young falcon took flight, but Goré  
Follows like a white hawk.  
The youth flew like a dark-blue pigeon,  
Goré follows him like a green vulture.  
The youth continues his way on foot,  
And Goré takes him by the right arm.'

Overcome by the pursuit of the wicked Goré, the youth seeks refuge in a cloister, which, according to the pious belief of the times, was a spot exempt from all sublunary evil, and where Goré dared not appear. (See Ilovaiski, pp. 231-235.)

#### DOMESTIC LIFE

The court adjacent to each house was surrounded by a sharp-pointed fence. The house was generally placed in the centre of the court, and consisted of several habitable buildings, united by passages, or covered corridors. The houses of the rich had a lower story, destined for servants or for stores; while apartments of the family were above. In a boyarine's court were many separate buildings for his numerous domestics, as well as for various necessary household supplies. A wealthy nobleman of that epoch had everything at home, and what he required was prepared by his servants. Beyond the chief court was a second, destined for carriages, domestic fowls, cattle, etc. Then there were a garden and a steam-bath or washing-house. The latter was a necessary appendage to every considerable dwelling.

The outward ornaments and furniture within private dwellings were not distinguished either by riches or variety. The carriage-entrance, shutters, balustrades, and other outward parts of a house were generally of carved wood, with different designs. There were also pitcher-shaped columns. In the dwellings of the poor, the windows were small and covered with a skin or bladder. In rich houses the windows were covered with mica, or Moscovy glass, on which were painted figures in different colours. In interior rooms, the chief space was occupied by an image of the Virgin, sometimes set in silver in an image-case with folding-doors. Images filled up the whole front corner, and before them was hung a lamp, lighted on the eve of great festivals (as is still the case in Russian houses). Ornaments for the walls consisted of pictures painted on wood, whose monstrous execution pleased the by no means fastidious taste of the ancient Russians. The subjects of these pictures were generally religious. One favourite representation was that of the Final Judgment, accompanied by various torments of hell. Sometimes, too, the pictures were scenes from popular stories, amusing or satirical. The popular humour thus at times assumed a coarse form, without any art whatsoever. One well-known picture, called 'Mice burying a Tom-cat,' depicted the different stages of intoxication.

But a model of art and elegant taste of that epoch was to be seen in the palace of Kolomensk, the summer residence of Alexei Michaelovitch, at seven versts from Moscow, and situated amid gardens, on a picturesque bank of the Moskva. The palace was built of wood, with a stone foundation, and presented a group of various-coloured erections, of different form and size. In them were carved doors, windows, staircases, balconies, pillars, varied-shaped roofs of green colour, with shining copper ridges. There were also terraces and pyramid-like towers, decorated with eagles or iron weathercocks. Near the windows of Moscovy glass were twisted gilt columns. Foreigners spoke of the Kolomensk palace as a beautiful toy. Simeon Polotzki sang its praise in verse. The palace stood till the reign of Catherine II. (1762-1796), when it fell to decay and was finally removed; but plans and drawings of it still remain.

The ancient Russians, on great festivals, liked to give sumptuous entertainments and to wear costly clothing. But in general great carefulness was universal. Karamzine mentions that fashion then did not change as in our own times, so that each wealthy boyarine had expensive garments which served several generations. Notwithstanding, silver vessels and other objects of luxury were used but seldom, and were carefully preserved.

In the dress of ancient Russians the favourite colour was red. In fact, the



adjectives 'red' and 'beautiful' were then synonymous. A distinctive mark of princes and boyards was the high hat made of expensive fur, and with a peaked velvet summit. The upper classes, in Eastern fashion, closely covered the head, while the hair was cut short. But the longer the beard was, the more honourable did it appear. The attempt of the Grand Prince Vasili Ioannovitch to shave the beard had no success, because the clergy rose in arms against the innovation. In general, in Russia, the ancient form of men's attire is still preserved in the vestments of the so-called 'white' or secular clergy.

Women's dress was usually distinguished by many different colours, and a number of small ornaments. At that epoch, stoutness, in both sexes, was esteemed necessary for beauty. Foreigners speak of Russian women as sufficiently handsome and good-looking, but in towns women were universally accustomed to paint with red and white. Andréev mentions that even during the reign of Catherine II., *i.e.* about one hundred years ago, it was customary to hire maid-servants with or without their own paint.

At an earlier epoch, those disposed to avoid the use of paint were subjected to positive persecution. According to the testimony of the Holstein ambassador, the famous Adam Olearius, who visited Moscow during the reign of Michael Feodorovitch (1613-1645), the following incident occurred when the consort of a distinguished nobleman, Prince Ivan Borisovitch Tscherkassov, a beautiful woman, did not wish to paint, the wives of the other boyards rose in arms against her. It was affirmed that she despised the ancient customs of her country, and thus put her equals to shame. These Russian boyarinii, by means of their husbands, actually forced the beautiful princess to paint. 'Thus she appeared like a lighted candle in the rays of the sun.' (Ilovaiski, pp. 219-220.)

#### MANNERS AND CUSTOMS

Until the second half of the seventeenth century, when the influence of Western civilisation began, although feebly, to be felt in the higher ranks of Russian society; the same customs and popular belief which we now find only in country villages were then universal at the court of the sovereign, in the dwellings of nobles, in the huts of peasants. In domestic life the higher orders were alone distinguished from the lower by having more means and by keeping their wives and daughters in utter seclusion. The Czarines and Czarevnii lived unseen; and, when it did happen that they went on pilgrimage, the windows of their conveyances were carefully covered with silk, while a numerous troop of bondmen surrounded the travellers. It even sometimes occurred that the daughters of distinguished individuals had actually never been to church



previous to their marriage. To teach a girl to read was considered quite useless. This sad state of affairs, of course, resulted from the want of enlightenment and the baneful influence of Eastern barbarism. During the epoch of the appanaged system in Russia, women had enjoyed a certain amount of freedom, but during the thirteenth century their position underwent a change in the higher classes. Women were separated from the society of men, and were shut up in apartments, where they spent their whole life, doomed to inaction and weariness. Spinning, embroidering with gold or beads (usually vestments for the clergy, or church ornaments), the society of maid-servants—a monotonous kind of living—filled up the time of boyards' wives and daughters. Marriage, on both sides, was entirely arranged by parents. The consent of the young couple was not even asked. In general, the bridegroom could not see his bride till the very end of the wedding. Hence, much deception frequently occurred among the boyards' families. For example, instead of the daughter promised, another, with some defect, was substituted. Or if the relations of the bridegroom came to look at the bride, in her stead they saw a pretty maid-servant. Only Christian understanding of marriage softened the slave-like fate of women, and raised them to the position of friends. Book-learned Russians of the sixteenth century, in the following traits, represent an ideal woman :—‘She uncomplainingly submits to the elder, *i.e.* to her husband and to his parents, diligently busies herself with housekeeping, lightens the sad position of bondmen in the house, and performs other exploits of Christian charity, such as fasting, almsgiving, and prayer.’

In general, the aim of these ideal women was ascetic. Penetrated by deep faith, they denied themselves the pleasures of life, and carried on a constant struggle with their passions, sometimes represented in form of the devil.

The peculiar views of ancient Russians concerning the intercourse between husband and wife were derived from the *Domostroi*, or *Rules for Family Life*. The *Domostroi* was written by a priest of the Annunciation Cathedral, Sylvester, the same who enacted so prominent a part during the reign of John the Terrible. In the said book, Sylvester instructs his son Anfimius how to organise his household, how to conduct himself towards his wife, how to bring up his children, etc. Among other remarks, Sylvester gives the following advice :—‘If a wife, son, or daughter is disobedient to the husband, or father, or mother, the husband should, in private, beat the offender with a whip, but neither with his fist nor with a stick, so as not to disfigure any one, or to spoil his or her health.’ (Ilovaiski, p. 228.)

As far as the conveniences of domestic life were concerned, most inhabitants of the Moscovite state were little in advance of their ancestors, Russians of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. True, the treasury of later sovereigns was

richer than that of the Grand Princes of Moscow had been. The former, too, possessed more costly ornaments in form of gold, silver, and precious stones, more distinguished servants, more horses, more conveyances lined with cloth and velvet. A great many dishes were daily prepared in the imperial kitchen. The tables of the wealthy were also remarkable for abundance. Land produced all manner of eatables. The rich showed their wealth by keeping many bondmen and horses. Notwithstanding, dwellings were in reality narrow and bare. Stone houses, as formerly, were uncommon. Benches and tables covered with carpets were the only furniture. Decorated images were the only ornaments of houses. In fact, their construction was so simple, that wooden houses, ready for erection, were actually sold at markets. The streets were paved with wooden planks. (Till recently, this was also the case in St. Petersburg.) Then, as now, frequent conflagrations were like scourges in Russia. But especially in ancient times the people suffered much from precautions taken against fires. For example, in summer, from May till September, the inhabitants of towns were forbidden to heat stoves, either in private houses or in baths, so that in order to prepare food, stoves were placed in kitchen-gardens, or in other spots far from the house. That was particularly onerous to the inhabitants of northern towns, exposed to cold wind. So that at their request they were allowed to heat in cloudy weather, as also on certain days of the week and on great festivals.

The thinly-populated country and the vast extent of forests gave ample space to gangs of robbers, who much injured rural population, and especially did harm to trade. Even in the very capital, robberies were frequent. During the carnival, robbers composed of persons in every grade went about in large gangs, with arms, and beat and plundered those they met.

The peculiarities of the Moscovite court, its frequent intercourse with Asiatic nations, the constant enmity of neighbouring European states, gave foreign intercourse with Moscow an Oriental character. In that intercourse, suspicion prevailed which far surpassed the limits of suitable and necessary prudence. That peculiar form of diplomatic intercourse began to predominate during the reign of John the Terrible, at which epoch transactions injurious to the state were discovered between Lithuanian ambassadors and some nobles. An ambassador was henceforth considered as a man who came with evil intentions to remark and report all he saw! Therefore it was that he was kept shut up and not permitted to hold intercourse with any. Nay, even those who approached the ambassador's residence were arrested. The official who held direct intercourse with an ambassador was obliged, in his presence, to praise the power and hospitality of the Moscovite state. Then, if the ambassador broached any important or unpleasant

question, the official was to feign ignorance of it. When an ambassador passed through a town, its inhabitants were ordered to appear in crowds, dressed in their best, so that a foreigner might only see a large wealthy population. In any intercourse with the Moscovite state, foreigners were especially enjoined in no wise to diminish or to mutilate the titles of the great sovereign. To insist on their correct enumeration was supposed to maintain its honour, and was considered a very important affair. To be an ambassador was not considered a special honour. Hence, in general, second-rate dignitaries were alone nominated to fill that position. Rarely, only in circumstances of peculiar importance, especially in intercourse with the Polish court, were highly-placed plenipotentiary boyards appointed as ambassadors. During the seventeenth century, the appearance of foreign residents in Moscow, and Moscovite functionaries at neighbouring foreign courts, already indicated a change in the character of diplomatic intercourse.

‘Foreigners who at this epoch visited the Moscovite state observed that it had a very dark side. Russians themselves also were aware of that. The church and government both inveighed against these evils and demanded amendment. Foreigners, however, as we have already noticed, could not fail to be struck with the wonderful ability of the Russians. “Ignorance enchains that people; but how great, how terrible will it become when enlightened!” was the expression of these strangers. And, indeed, we cannot but recognise the moral force of a people who triumphed over almost insurmountable obstacles. For the Russians were placed in the most unfavourable historical circumstances. Such, for example, as the following:—the neighbourhood, the incessant struggle and intercourse, with Asiatic barbarians, the vast extent of the country, a rigorous climate, placed far from the sea, far from those European states more favoured by circumstances, and therefore able to promote civilisation. Russia, notwithstanding, succeeded in maintaining its European, Christian type, and laboured the while incessantly with the most scanty means. It populated vast regions in eastern Europe and northern Asia, and there laid the foundation of Christian enlightenment.

‘And although in unceasing struggle with unfavourable circumstances, amid a hard and poor existence, it neither lost its moral force nor its ability to aim at a better future. After triumphantly terminating a struggle with the East, and becoming tranquil subsequent to the internal sedition at the commencement of the seventeenth century, the Moscovite state at that very time began more and more to hold intercourse with the West, and to borrow from it the fruits of civilisation, although with interruption, in a one-sided manner, with hesitation, as is usually the case at the commencement of an undertaking. And at the same



time, as the internal need of intercourse with the West was more and more felt, one important obstacle to its accomplishment was removed, in the gradual weakness of the Polish state, an event particularly remarkable during the reign of Alexei Michaelovitch. Sweden alone remained as a barrier between Europe and Moscow, by retaining for itself the shores of the Baltic. To overcome that final obstacle, to satisfy that greatly felt necessity of the Moscovite state, were acts destined to be accomplished by the youngest son of Alexei Michaelovitch—Peter the Great.'

With this chapter terminates the fourth period of the history of Russia, *i.e.* the epoch comprised between the abolition of the Tartar yoke in 1480 and the reign of Peter I., 1682-1725.

The fifth period dates from the reign of Peter till our own times.

(See Soloviev's *Abridged History of Russia*, p. 230-232.)

## PERIOD V

THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE, UNDER PETER THE GREAT AND HIS  
SUCCESSORS, TILL OUR OWN TIMES

## CHAPTER I

REIGN OF PETER THE GREAT, 1682-1689-1725—PETER ALEXÉEVITCH CHOSEN  
SOVEREIGN—DIVIDED POWER—REGENCY OF SOPHIA ALEXÉEVNA, 1682-1689  
—IOANN AND PETER REIGN CONJOINTLY, 1689-1696—DEATH OF IOANN,  
1696

1682.

At this epoch there was no fixed law in Russia concerning inheritance of the throne. Feodor Alexéevitch had made no arrangement regarding his heir. Next in age to the deceased sovereign was the Czarevitch Ioann. But he was weak both physically and mentally. Accordingly, common sense suggested that his claims to the throne should be overlooked, and that they should be conferred on his younger stepbrother Peter. True, the latter then was only ten years old. Notwithstanding, he was endued with great bodily strength and no ordinary capacity. The patriarch Joachim and the greater part of the nobles were of opinion that Peter should be proclaimed sovereign. The patriarch accordingly ordered the people to assemble in an open space of the city, and asked them: 'Which of the two brothers, Ioann or Peter, must reign?' 'Peter Alexéevitch!' was shouted by the multitude. So the patriarch blessed Peter as reigning sovereign.

DIVIDED POWER—THE CZARINE-DOWAGER NATALIA KIRILLOVNA AND THE  
CZARÉVNA SOPHIA ALEXÉEVNA

But sedition soon ensued, for it was profitable to not a few. Peter, as we have already mentioned, was son of Natalia Kirillovna Narishkine, the second consort of Alexei Michaelovitch. During the reign of her stepson Feodor she

had experienced a bitter lot. She had lived in seclusion, while her second father, Matvéev, who had sheltered and brought her up, was sent into exile. All that had taken place through the malice and intrigues of the Miloslavskies and their friends. The former, it will be remembered, were the relatives of Alexei Michaelovitch by his first consort, Mary Miloslavskaia; but now their reign was over, and it was the turn of Natalia to appear as a prominent personage in the government. According to the then existing custom in Russia, it was on the Czarine-Dowager that two important duties devolved, namely, guardianship of the yet minor son, together with administration of the state. Natalia's first act was to recall Matvéev from his exile in Looh (government of Kostroma). He was once more brought to Moscow, there to fill the same place he had occupied during the reign of Alexei. Of course the Miloslavskies and their friends had henceforth little to expect. For this very reason it was that they made use of every possible effort to oppose the decree by which Peter had been chosen to fill the throne instead of Mary Miloslavski's son, the elder Czarevitch Ioann. The opposite party also especially desired that Natalia should not be regent. But who was to enact the principal part in this daring opposition to the established order of things? Ioann could do nothing for himself. It therefore remained that his sister, the ambitious Sophia Alexéevna, should execute the plan of the Miloslavskies. As we have already seen, during the reign of Alexei Michaelovitch new customs had begun to penetrate to the imperial palace. Thus a considerable change was already effected in the mode of life hitherto led by the princesses of the reigning dynasty. They were henceforth no longer doomed to the strict seclusion in which they had formerly been kept. This change, together with the greater degree of freedom granted them, induced Sophia Alexéevna, the most energetic and ambitious of the family, to appear in court circles. She, besides, had acquired information by reading and by conversation with enlightened individuals, particularly the wise, well-informed Prince Vasili Vasilievitch Golitzine. In this wise, Sophia began to exert influence on those around her. It may therefore be easily understood why she felt it peculiarly hard to renounce all this, as she was forced to do after her own brother Feodor's death. In consequence of it, and of events above narrated, administration of affairs had passed to Sophia's widowed stepmother, Natalia, and to the irritated Matvéev. Sophia had now no other perspective than gloomy captivity, from which endeavours must be made to escape. She accordingly sought means to avert misfortune, but lawful means there were none; illegal measures could alone be found. They consisted in profiting by the discontent and agitation prevalent among the armed masses of the strelitz.



## REVOLT OF THE STRELITZ

15th May  
1682—Revolt  
of the strelitz.

The discontent and agitation above mentioned originated from the lawless proceedings of those who commanded the militia or strelitz. The latter did not receive pay, and were forced to work for their oppressors. Even during the reign of Feodor Alexéevitch this agitation had begun. When Peter was chosen to fill the throne, the strelitz presented a petition to the new government, which showed weakness. Without any investigation of the affair, the commanding officers were found guilty, and, although punished, were left in their posts. The strelitz were thereupon exasperated, and began to take law into their own hands, formed a sort of assembly or council, and by general decree the hated commanders were sentenced to be thrown down from a belfry. After allowing themselves this violence, the strelitz did not, however, fail to be aware that they had acted illegally, that the government would become stronger, and that then it would certainly punish their lawless proceedings. Notwithstanding, from the palace itself they were led to believe that the imperial family had need of their services, in return for which the offenders would not only receive pardon for the past, but would obtain new rights and ample rewards. Besides, Sophia and her like-minded associates, the boyarine Ivan Michaelovitch Miloslavski and two brothers Tolstoi, endeavoured to spread reports among the strelitz that a Dr. Von Gaden, formerly in Moscow, had poisoned Feodor Alexéevitch at the suggestion of the Czarine Natalia; that the Czarevitch Ioann had been unjustly excluded from the throne; that the Narishkines were making attempts on his life; that the strelitz should save the prince and chastise traitors to him; that the boyards were on the point of doing so by means of the strelitz. These reports produced the desired effect among the strelitz, and soon afterwards they received a list of the names of traitors who should be put to death.

15th May  
1682.

During the morning of May 15, 1682, Sophia's like-minded associates rode off to an army of strelitz with the news that the Narishkines had strangled the Czarevitch Ioann. The strelitz were soon in commotion. Amid the sounds of the alarm-bell and the beating of drums, an army amounting to 15,000 men rushed to the Kreml, shouting the while that vengeance was about to overtake traitors and murderers of the imperial race. When the strelitz reached the palace they loudly demanded the heads of the Narishkines, assassins of the Czarevitch. Whereupon the Czarine Natalia led out both the brothers, Ioann and Peter, to the great staircase, in order to prove that they were safe and sound. Ioann, besides, added that no attempt had been made on his life. So the sedition was about to terminate. Matvéev and the patriarch, by wise exhortations,

entirely succeeded in disarming the strelitz, and went back to the palace in order to quiet the Czarine. But, unfortunately, Prince Michael Dolgorooki, commander of the strelitz, began to scream at them, and in a threatening tone ordered them to disband. So they once more became excited. They rushed to the staircase, seized Dolgorooki, and threw him down; below, where he fell, he was caught on a pike. Others seized Matvéev, who had also the same fate. The courtiers fled in terror, and delivered up the palace to the fury of the strelitz. With loud shouts, 'It is time for us to choose whom we need,' the enraged rebels rushed forward. Everywhere, even in the church, under the altar, they searched to see that none of the Narishkines or their like-minded associates had hidden, for their names were on the fatal list. Any who were found were immediately seized, thrown down the stair, and caught below on a pike. The rebels meanwhile 1682. made mistakes, by confounding one person with another. Thus many perished. The Czarine's brother, Ivan Kirillovitch Narishkine, succeeding in hiding himself, so that the strelitz could not find him during the first day; but on the next they came for him, and also did not find him. On the third they once more appeared, when the Czarine was forced to give him up. He was first tortured, and then stuck on a pike. 'Now we are satisfied,' vociferated the rebels. 'May God grant our sovereign health. Let him judge the remainder, and we shall willingly die for him.'

The strelitz meanwhile thought not of any change in the government, but Sophia thought of it; for she alone acted at that epoch of general terror and anarchy. At her instigation the strelitz sent some of their chosen members to the palace in order to demand that both brothers, *i.e.* Ioann and Peter, should reign conjointly. Accordingly, a council was summoned, composed of different individuals in office (of course, those in Moscow), and they agreed to this arrangement.

On May 23 twenty-nine strelitz once more appeared with a new demand, or in other words, that on account of the princes' youth government should meanwhile be confided to their sister, Sophia Alexéevna. Consent to that was obtained also.

#### REGENCY OF SOPHIA ALEXÉEVNA, 1682-1689—MOVEMENT AMONG THE RASKOLNIKS

Sophia thus attained her aim; in other words, supreme power was vested in her hands. Matvéev and the most energetic of the Narishkines were no more. Her stepmother was removed from government. However, Sophia had obtained her desire by means at once illegal and dangerous. Constant care was thus

necessary in order to retain her power; for others also endeavoured by unlawful means to further their own ends. Amongst the first to do so were the Raskolniks, and likewise Prince Ivan Andréévitch Hovanski, the new commander of the strelitz, nominated by Sophia herself.

The chief representatives of the Raskol, or sect of the so-called Old Believers, who adhered to ancient, uncorrected books of church service, were Avakoom, Lazare, and the diakon (or under-priest) Feodor. During the regency of Sophia Alexéevna it so happened that the Raskolniks in the armies of the strelitz thought to profit by their triumph in order to demand from the higher clergy direct answers to the questions: 'Why did they hate the ancient church books? Why did they reject the old faith and adopt the new, or that of Latin Rome?' Next on the scene appeared old Raskolniks, interdicted for the sect of a priest Nikita (Nicetas), surnamed Poostosviat. Monks, too, joined Hovanski, while he declared to them that he favoured the old faith, and promised it his co-operation. Let it be kept in mind that the subjection of the Solovetzki revolt, as well as torture, imprisonment, and executions, had not diminished the Raskol during the reigns of Alexei and Feodor.

Notwithstanding, the greater part of the strelitz did not uphold the Raskol. 'That is not our affair, but that of the patriarch,' said they. Still, Nikita did not lose courage, because he hoped for Hovanski's protection. So the Raskolniks openly taught their belief, in public places of the city, or where trade was carried on. The people thereby became excited, and on June 5 Nikita Poostosviat, accompanied by a large crowd, appeared at the Kreml in order to summon the patriarch to the Red or Beautiful Square, a central part of Moscow, and there to hold an open disputation with him. The patriarch, however, was unwilling to appear in the midst of the city without some of the imperial family, as he feared the violence of the people. The Raskolniks also were afraid to go to the palace, in case they might there be seized and made captives. At last the regent Sophia decided that the disputation should take place at the palace, in the Angular Hall, in presence of herself, her stepmother Natalia Kirillovna, and the two young sovereigns. The Raskolniks rushed with noise into the hall, and there began to read old prayers, disrespectful to the memory of Alexei and Feodor. In vain did Sophia endeavour to restrain them, especially Nikita. At length, actually shedding tears of vexation, she turned to the chosen members of the strelitz, and thus addressed them: 'At what are you looking? Is it suitable for such peasants to come and revolt before our very eyes? It is impossible for us to live longer here. Let us go to another town, and thence inform the people of this disobedience and uproar.'



The chosen members thereupon replied, that from the concourse and agitation of the people it was impossible to take immediate measures against the Raskolniks, but that it would be better to await a convenient moment for so doing. Thus the disputation was prolonged till the evening. Under pretext of the late hour, the Raskolniks were then dismissed. They were also told that on the following day they would learn the sovereign's decision. The Raskolniks, in triumph, left the palace, while shouting, 'We have overcome!' But their triumph was of short duration; they were greatly in minority. Sophia meanwhile acted with so much dexterity that, during the space of a week, the leaders of the Raskol were seized. Nikita was beheaded, others were shut up in captivity, while the remainder dispersed in various directions.

#### HOVANSKI'S OVERTHROW

Sophia had thus got quit of some dangerous Raskolniks; but it was more difficult to get quit of Hovanski, who had entirely gained the goodwill of the strelitz by granting all their wishes. As for the strelitz, they never named Hovanski otherwise than 'father,' and were ready to obey him in everything. On seeing the devotion of this powerful militia, Hovanski forgot himself. He offended the regent by his self-will, and the nobles, too, by his pride, his boasting, and undervaluing their services. Finally, he excited the strelitz, and encouraged them to revolt. They believed reports circulated that measures were taken against them. At length, on September 2, while the imperial family was at Kolomensk, a denunciation appeared against Hovanski. He was accused of endeavouring to destroy the imperial family by aid of the strelitz, afterwards to kill the boyards, and to declare himself sovereign. According to contemporaries, all these false charges were made by the Miloslavskies in order to hasten Hovanski's overthrow. Be that as it may, however, Sophia resolved to execute what she had threatened during the agitation caused by the Raskolniks, in other words, to quit Moscow, and to raise the nobles and boyards' children against the strelitz. Under pretext of performing a pilgrimage, she went from Kolomensk to the Sabbas Storojevski monastery, and thence to the Trinity cloister (Troitza). Not far from it she halted, at the village of Vozdvijinsk. She thence issued documents to different towns, summoning those in service to aid in quelling a revolt of the strelitz and of Hovanski. The latter and his son were both seized on the way to Troitza, to which they were going on Sophia's invitation. They were then taken to Vozdvijinsk. In vain the accused demanded a trial; both father and son were beheaded. On learning the fate of

their favourite commander, the strelitz were at first in a state of excitement, but afterwards they recollected themselves. They knew that they were powerless. Besides, they also heard that a large force was assembled at Troitza. They then begged the patriarch's intercession. It was accepted. But the regent demanded that chosen members among the strelitz should themselves bring their submission to her. Accordingly, as it is said, three thousand men went to the monastery with ropes round their necks, and carrying a block and an axe in their hands. Pardon was thereupon granted, on condition that henceforth no more mutiny appeared amongst them. Sophia then gave command of the strelitz to an energetic man, entirely devoted to her interests. We allude to Shakloveeti, a peasant's son, and consequently not formidable, because of insignificant origin. He was secretary of the council; he had been promoted to that position after being a clerk. (See Soloviev's *History of Russia*, p. 237, and Ilovaiski, p. 239.)

#### INTERIOR ADMINISTRATION OF THE REGENT SOPHIA

The interior administration of the regent Sophia, in spite of its brief duration and the seditious state of the country, was, notwithstanding, remarkable for several wise arrangements and laws.

It had hitherto been the custom that a debtor, till he by labour had paid what he owed, was delivered up to his creditor. But at this epoch care was taken not to separate husbands from wives. It was decreed what particular sum should be equivalent to a year's labour. A creditor was, moreover, obliged to promise by writing that he would not act cruelly towards such a workman. After the death of the debtor, his widow and children were not forced to pay his debts if no property of the deceased remained. A woman who killed her husband was no longer doomed to be buried in the earth with only her head above ground. Decapitation was henceforth to be the punishment of such criminals. Death was no longer to be the sentence of the blasphemer; after being beaten by the knout, the offender was sent into exile. In these measures we cannot fail to remark a degree of leniency compared with previous times. Unfortunately, however, there was as yet no leniency shown towards the Raskolniks; quite the reverse. Among these sectarians of that epoch there besides began to appear diverse heretical opinions. Some of these fanatics even deemed it necessary to inflict torment on themselves, such, for example, as burning their own bodies. This was indeed considered a salutary exploit. But these fanatics met with no mercy from government. The so-called Old Believers were flogged by the knout, while impenitent heretics perished in the flames.



Then the persecuted fled in different directions. Some went towards the Polish and Swedish boundaries; others fled to the steppes of the Don and the Koom. Besides a struggle with the Raskol, there were at this epoch also hot disputes with Romanists. One general subject of disputation was, 'When did transubstantiation take place—at the moment the Holy Spirit was invoked, or while the words "Take, eat, and live," were pronounced?' The latter opinion, according to the testimony of the patriarch Joachim, had been brought to Moscow by young men who had gone to Poland in order there to learn Latin. This opinion was at first maintained by the famous Simeon Polotzki, and then by his pupil and friend, the clerk Simeon (or, in the monastic state, Sylvester) Medviedev. The latter has left curious notes of contemporary events. According to the expression of the times, 'Medviedev was a man of great mind and acutely learned.' He was the founder of the Zaikonespasski monastery and the friend of Shakloveeti, while both were ardent partisans of Sophia. As such, Medviedev could the more easily propagate his opinions. Against them the chief opponents were the brothers Lichoodi, Loannikius, and Sophronius. Their disputations so much arrested the attention of the public that not only the clergy, but lay members of society and even women, used to argue concerning transubstantiation. The opponents of Medviedev named his opinions 'the bread-worshipping heresy.'

#### PEACE WITH POLAND, 1686

Among exterior acts of administration during Sophia's regency, the most remarkable was the permanent peace and alliance with Poland, followed by war with Turkey. As in former times Smolensk had been the great obstacle to peace between Moscow and Poland, so now the chief obstacle was Kiev. According to the peace of Androosov, Poland had ceded Kiev to Moscow only for a time. But Moscow in no wise wished to return that essentially Russian city. As for Poland, it was by necessity alone reduced to a permanent confirmation of the peace of Androosov, and at this epoch Poland was exactly in a similar position. For its famous and warlike king, Ian Sobieski, in spite of his renown, could not alone struggle against Turkey, and was therefore forced to seek the aid and alliance of Moscow. There, consent was given to alliance only on condition of permanent peace, which would confirm Russia in the possession of Kiev and all the acquisitions of Androosov. In 1686, when this peace was eventually concluded, tears of vexation filled the eyes of the heroic Ian Sobieski, so onerous were the conditions for Poland and so advantageous were they for Moscow.



## CAMPAIGN IN THE CRIMEA

1687. That profitable peace was, however, purchased by war with Turkey. The empire and Venice were at this epoch allies of Poland. By advancing to the Crimea, the Russian forces were to hinder the khan from aiding Turkey. Thus did Moscow decide on seeking its sworn enemy in its own regions. But the expedition to the Crimea, across boundless steppes, was exceedingly difficult for a large army to accomplish.

Sophia's favourite, Prince Vasili Vasilievitch Golitzine, began the march during the spring of 1687, at the head of a hundred thousand men, joined by the hetman Samoilovitch, with fifty thousand Cossacks. The Russian army on its way did not meet with Tartars, but encountered an enemy still more dangerous, *i.e.* a fire in the steppes. The horses began to perish from fatigue and want of food in the burning plains, while the troops were enfeebled by the heat of July, and by a fine soot in the air, so dense that adjacent objects were with difficulty discerned. Golitzine thereupon assembled a council of war, which decided to return. This failure was made use of by Samoilov's enemies, for he had made not a few on account of his pride and his love of gain. These enemies presented denunciations against Samoilovitch to Golitzine, adding at the same time that the hetman was inimical to the Moscovite state, and that if the regent would not consent to depose him the Cossacks themselves would do so and elect another. Thus Samoilovitch was deposed, and with difficulty was saved from the fury of the enraged Cossacks by the protection of Prince Golitzine. The old hetman was sent in exile to Siberia, and in his stead Ivan Stepanovitch Mazeppa was chosen.

Mazeppa was a remarkably cunning man, but pretty well educated for his time.

Ilovaiski (p. 240) mentions a statement made in the biography of a petty Polish nobleman named Paska, that Mazeppa during his youth had served at the court of the Polish king, Jan Casimir. While there, one pan (nobleman) was highly incensed because Mazeppa had paid too much attention to his wife, and vowed revenge. The nobleman accordingly seized Mazeppa, stripped him naked, bound him to the back of a horse, and set it free in the open fields. The horse was a native of Ukraine, and wended its course thither. The Cossacks there found Mazeppa half dead, and for a lengthened period he disappeared. At last he again was seen in Ukraine, in the army of the hetman Doroshenko. But Mazeppa betrayed Doroshenko and favoured Samoilovitch, whose children were taught to read and write by Mazeppa. Finally the latter, by Samoilovitch's aid,

procured the important post of military scribe. Notwithstanding, Mazeppa betrayed Samoilovitch, and was even the chief cause of his fall.

Mazeppa's election as hetman was favoured by Prince Golitzine.

During the spring of 1689 Golitzine undertook a second expedition to the 1689. Crimea, with an army as large as before, and along with the new hetman Mazeppa. On this occasion the steppes were crossed without misfortune: The khan, with all his forces, could not prevent the Russians from reaching Perekop. But as Golitzine saw no advantage to be gained by taking that fort, and as it became impossible to remain longer in these regions, for want of water, grass, and wood, he returned.

#### CONVENTION OF MERTSCHINSK

Thus terminated two unsuccessful enterprises to the Crimea, undertaken during Sophia's regency. In 1689 was concluded the Convention of Mertschinsk with China. The Russian plenipotentiary Golovine, having little correct information concerning a distant spot like eastern Siberia, consented to cede to China both banks of the river Amoor. In consequence of this treaty the fort of Albazine, defended so bravely by the Cossacks against the Chinese, was demolished, 1689.

#### CHILDHOOD AND EARLY EDUCATION OF PETER THE GREAT

At the very time when both the interior and exterior of the Moscovite state were already becoming accustomed to see Sophia at the head of government, her regency was notwithstanding at its close. Her elder brother Ioann, indifferent to everything, was in no wise formidable to her. But the regent's danger gradually increased with the growth of her younger stepbrother Peter. We have already mentioned that his lot had been sad after his father's death, and during the reign of Feodor Alexéevitch. On the decease of the latter, the young prince for a brief interval had been surrounded by the dazzle of supreme power. But for that temporary distinction the child-sovereign and his mother were doomed to pay dearly. Thus the position of the Czarine Natalia, after the revolt of the strelitz, was no better than it had been during Feodor's reign, although her son Peter was entitled sovereign, and although he had been crowned along with his elder stepbrother Ioann. Peter, as the son of Alexei's second consort Natalia, was hated by the all-powerful regent. Indeed, he was, as it were, a sovereign in disgrace. Accordingly, none paid any attention to him, or thought of his education. It is true that during Feodor's reign Peter had been taught to read and write. But his teacher, a secretary named Zotov, was a servile man, who neither by moral

nor mental qualities could ever obtain any influence over a child endued by nature with no ordinary capacity. With Zotov's lessons the education of Peter terminated; and henceforth he was left to himself. Such was the mental culture of a boy full of ardour, with an insatiable thirst for knowledge and unwearied patience for research. On seeing any new object he would stop and examine it minutely, not content till his curiosity was satisfied. Besides, he himself would immediately set to work and try to put his knowledge into practice. 'Peter did not walk, he ran,' say his contemporaries. Thus we can more easily understand his ardent nature, his energetic disposition, unequalled in history. To gratify his longing for activity, knowledge, and investigation, Peter found but a narrow sphere in the forsaken palace of his lonely, widowed mother. In that deserted dwelling there was no one like Simeon Polotzki, who might have induced the young prince to remain at home, while communicating useful information to him, or exercising a salutary influence over him by endeavouring to restrain his juvenile impetuosity. Peter found no such individual in his mother's residence; and none troubled themselves to procure a mentor for the young prince. Peter was accordingly sad and dull in the palace. He therefore ran out into the street. There he assembled many youths of his own age, and they amused themselves with military games. The latter gradually assumed a more extensive form, so that at last Peter formed two regiments named the Preobrajenski and the Simeonovski (from two villages near Moscow). To join these regiments volunteers were invited, and they soon appeared from among different classes. All, without distinction, were received; while various grades were granted according to ability. At length Peter quitted the palace entirely, and also totally renounced former customs and traditionary habits observed by previous sons of Moscow princes. Young and full of force, he rejected all remembrances and influence of the past, and thereby more fully prepared himself for the important part of a reorganiser, which he was about to enact.

However, military amusements alone did not entirely engross the attention of Peter. He had, as we have already remarked, an insatiable thirst for knowledge. While playing at military games, and forming armies, he showed a desire for progress in the art of war according to the most recent European tactics; the representatives of that art were at hand. In Moscow an entire suburb (now a street), still named 'the German village,' was full of hired foreign officers. To them young Peter accordingly applied for information. In this wise a new world was opened up to him, to which he at once became attached. Certainly these foreign officers could not teach Peter a great deal, as they themselves were not learned. However, they were, in general, lively, clever men who had seen



much. Their narrations displayed to Peter the whole Western world of marvels, the marvels of civilisation. The narrators showed the wealth of that world compared with the poverty of the world in Russia. Peter was thus inflamed with an ardent desire to see that civilisation, and to judge it for himself. He longed, too, to introduce it into his own country. In that lively, uncereemonious circle of foreigners, Peter, of course, gradually became quite estranged from previous customs observed at the palace, and followed by the ancient princes of Russia.

Amongst the foreign officers above mentioned, Peter formed an especial friendship for François (Yakovlovitch) Lefort,<sup>1</sup> a native of Geneva, remarkable for his lively, open, liberal disposition. His want of selfishness, and his sincere attachment to Peter, still more confirmed the esteem of the latter. As a friend and a favourite companion, Lefort had great influence on Peter. In order to learn arithmetic, geometry, the art of fortification, etc., the young prince, then fifteen, sought out a teacher for himself in the person of a Dutchman named Timmerman. In former times sons of the Moscow princes did not receive a scientific education. True, Peter's elder stepbrother, Feodor, had done so, but with clerical characteristics, by means of the clergy. Peter, however, had no such clerical instructor. The young prince himself had directly applied to Western foreigners for instruction in science. Hence the secular character of education given to Russian princes subsequent to the reign of Peter; but, previous to him, science, although admitted, was, notwithstanding, under guardianship of the church, as we saw from the statutes of the Slavonian, Greek, and Latin academy, during the reign of Feodor Alexéevitch.

Ilovaiski (p. 241) mentions that François Lefort had come to Russia to seek his fortune in the imperial service while Alexei Michaelovitch occupied the throne. A Scotsman, General Patrick Gordon, was also much esteemed by Peter, and was one of his chief teachers in the military art. Subsequently Gordon became Peter's confidential adviser.

In *Regulations for Marine Service*, Peter himself (in a preface) gives the following details concerning the commencement of the Russian fleet:—

In 1688, on one occasion, Peter chanced to be along with Timmerman at a village named Izmailov, near Moscow, and was examining some old things which had belonged to Nikita Ivanovitch Romanov (cousin of Michael). The young prince found a foreign vessel, of a form unknown to him, and at once turned to Timmerman for explanations. Timmerman said that it was an English boat, which, by aid of sails, could not only sail with the wind, but even against it.

<sup>1</sup> Till this day one ward of Moscow bears the name of Lefortovski Tschast (i.e. administrative division ward).

The astonished prince then asked if there was any one who knew how to make the boat sail. Timmerman thereupon recommended a Dutch shipbuilder named Brandt, who, during the reign of Alexei Michaelovitch, had helped to build vessels for the Caspian Sea. Brandt complied with Peter's wish, launched the boat on the rivulet Yaoza (a tributary of the Moskva), and taught Peter how to steer. Peter was soon so enchanted with the boat that he had it first conveyed to a pond at Izmailov, and then to the lake of Periaslavl. But the young prince was not content with one boat alone. By Brandt's aid a whole flotilla of vessels was constructed to sail on the lake of Periaslavl.

Even Peter's marriage to Evdokia (pronounce Yev-do-kee-ia) Feodorovna Lopouchene (in January 1689, when he was only seventeen years old) did not allure him from his favourite occupation. But he was drawn from it for a time by sedition in Moscow.

#### OVERTHROW OF SOPHIA, 1689

1689—Over-  
throw of  
Sophia Alexé-  
evna.

The military amusements of young Peter in no wise alarmed Sophia. However, as he was gradually growing up, an open rupture between him and the ambitious princess-regent became inevitable. Sophia, notwithstanding, consoled herself that Peter's actual occupations withdrew him from Moscow, and especially from state affairs. Her partisans, meanwhile, made constant allusions to the young prince's jovial life, in order to blacken him in the eyes of the people. 'Our sovereign Sophia,' said they, 'is always praying to God, while there [*i.e.* at Peter's residence] one only hears playing on the organ and the violin.'

The regent's real danger, however, consisted in Peter's militia, his guard of young daring volunteers. But, after all, the hatred of Sophia and of her partisans was chiefly directed not against Peter exclusively, but against his mother, the Dowager-Princess Natalia Kirillovna, who along with two of her chief supporters, Leo Kirillovitch Narishkine and Prince Boris Alexéevitch Golitzine, did not cease to express displeasure at Sophia's ambition; for the latter princess entitled herself 'Autocrat Sovereign of all the Russians,' and mischief-makers faithfully reported to her all said against her by Natalia. Sophia's chief partisan, Shakloveeti, who would lose all by her fall, scrupled at no measures to postpone that event. 'Whatever happens to thee, sovereign princess, it were better for thee to name thyself Czarine!' said he to Sophia. And sure enough, in order to confirm her power, Sophia did indeed wish to be crowned; but the coldness with which the strelitz received the proposal caused her to delay her project for a time. During this interval Shakloveeti excited the hatred of the strelitz against the Czarine Natalia. But the same strelitz, who formerly had so quickly



hastened to save the young princess, did not now stir to murder Natalia. Shakloveeti had full command of only five men, ready to do all he wished. Accordingly, on the evening of August 7, 1689, when Shakloveeti assembled the strelitz at the Kreml, under pretext of defending Sophia, against whom he pretended that Peter and his guardsmen were marching, two strelitz set off at full speed to the village of Preobrajenski, where Peter was then living, in order to tell him of his danger. Peter was alarmed. He hastily mounted his horse and rode to the Trinity cloister. He was followed by his mother the Czarine, along with her daughter (Natalia Alexéevna) and Evdokia (Peter's consort). All his adherents soon joined him, as did also a whole regiment of Looharev's strelitz, who brought reports of all Shakloveeti's movements. Sophia now found herself in a critical position. She used every effort to bring Peter to Moscow, but in vain. She would have sent the patriarch to make peace between her and her brother; but the patriarch remained at the Trinity cloister. The chief guide of Peter was Prince Boris Alexévitch Golitzine, who arranged all wisely and with decision. By Peter's orders the greater part of the strelitz went to Troitza. On seeing the unfavourable turn of events, Sophia herself set off for that cloister in order to make an amicable arrangement with her brother, but she was forced to turn backward. Then there appeared an ambassador from Peter with orders to seize Shakloveeti and Sylvester Medviedev, the learned abbot of the Zaikonospasski monastery, along with their accomplices. In vain did Sophia urge the strelitz and people to take her part. They did not do so. Foreigners in the Russian service, and inhabiting 'the German Village,' went to Troitza by Peter's orders; and at last the strelitz themselves forced Sophia to give up Shakloveeti, who was executed at Troitza along with his accomplices. Sophia was then obliged to withdraw to the Novodevitche monastery. Her favourite, Prince Vasili Vasilievitch Golitzine, for upholding Sophia's ambition, and also for his mismanagement during the second campaign in the Crimea, was exiled to Poostozersk (government of Archangel), as was also his son. Medviedev was deposed for heresy and then executed as a traitor. Peter, at the age of seventeen, thus became sole sovereign of Russia. His elder stepbrother, Ioann, still continued to bear the honorary title of reigning prince, and was so styled in all documents. Yet although on solemn occasions he appeared with all the insignia of royalty, he, notwithstanding, took no real part in state affairs. He died in 1695.

Ioann Alexévitch married Paraskéeva Feodorovna Soltikov. They had several daughters—Mary, Theodosia, Catherine, Anna, and Prascovia. This princess contracted a morganatic alliance with Colonel Mamonov (according to Andréev's work, *Representatives of Power in Russia after Peter I.*, p 67). Anna



married the duke of Courland, and was afterwards reigning empress of Russia from 1730 to 1740. Catherine married Charles Leopold, duke of Mecklenburg. Their daughter, Elizabeth Anna, married Prince Anthony Ulric, duke of Brunswick. Anna was mother of the unhappy Ioann VI., born 24th August, 1740, became emperor 28th October of the same year, was dethroned in December 1741, and assassinated in the prison of Schlüsselburg, July 1764.

## CHAPTER II

REIGN OF PETER THE GREAT, 1689-1725—ADMINISTRATION OF PETER DURING THE FIRST FIVE YEARS SUBSEQUENT TO SOPHIA'S OVERTHROW—EXPEDITIONS TO AZOPH—SHIPBUILDING COMPANIES—ORGANISATION OF A GREAT EMBASSADE—CONSPIRACY OF TSEEKLER—PETER'S JOURNEY ABROAD

September 12, 1689—Commencement of Peter's reign. FROM September 12, 1689, Peter's actual reign accordingly began, when he was only seventeen years old. But on account of his extreme youth he took no real part in administration. Thus the first period subsequent to the overthrow of Sophia was passed in a state of inaction, as there was then no remarkable Russian statesman. In this wise, no important acts of interior or exterior policy took place. During that interval Peter completed his own education as he had commenced it, or, in other words, his time was passed between military amusements, shipbuilding, picking up information everywhere, and immediately putting that information into practice. In fact, the young sovereign was an unwearied workman. He only rested from his labours in gay parties of his favourite companions. We have already mentioned that among them prominent places were occupied by François Lefort and Patrick Gordon, although the latter (according to Soloviev, p. 244), on account of a certain coldness and caution resulting from Jesuitical education, could not so fully gain the confidence of youth as did the lively, open-hearted Genevese Lefort. Gordon had entered the Russian service during the reign of Alexei Michaelovitch; and although not possessed of brilliant military talent, this Scotsman was, notwithstanding, brave, experienced, and conscientious. At the period of which we now write, although Peter showed marked preference for foreigners and foreign customs, yet there were two distinct parties at his court, *i.e.* the old and the new, at open enmity with each other. And Peter again, on account of his extreme youth, had not acquired sufficient firmness of will to assign the victory to the very party which he actually favoured.

The patriarch Joachim had died. In his testament he implored the young

sovereign to abandon 'cursed heretics' (*i.e.* foreigners), and to remove them from commanding Russian armies. Besides, concerning the choice of a successor to the patriarchal dignity, there was again strife between the above-mentioned parties. The new party, headed by Peter, desired that the learned Marcellus, metropolitan of Pskov, should be elected patriarch, while the old party, dreading that Marcellus would too much favour innovations and foreigners, proposed Adrian, metropolitan of Kazane, as a suitable candidate, for it was known that he considered shaving of the beard as a blasphemous heresy. But Peter, in spite of his own conviction, yielded to the old party; and Adrian was accordingly elected patriarch.

#### EXPEDITIONS TO AZOPH, 1695

Notwithstanding, the triumph of the old party could not long continue. The young sovereign openly favoured innovations. In letters he already signed his name 'Petrus' and 'Piter.' In mock battles the commander of the Russian side, Prince Feodor Rodonomovski, was entitled 'Generalissimus Frederick.' Although so much attracted by military amusements, Peter, however, did not forget his fleet, which still continued to be augmented at Periaslavl. 'For some years,' writes Peter, 'I gratified my wish to sail vessels on the Lake of Periaslavl. But at last it became too narrow for me. So I went to the Lake of Koobenski (government of Vologda), although, also, it was not wide enough. Whereupon I decided on viewing the sea itself; so I asked my mother's permission to go to Archangel. Many times did she endeavour to dissuade me from so long and dangerous a journey, but on seeing my great desire to undertake it, she at length gave an unwilling consent for me to set out.'

Accordingly, during the summer of 1693, Peter went to Archangel, sailed on the White Sea, saw foreign vessels, admired them, built some for himself, and ordered others to be bought in Holland. 1693—Peter's visit to Archangel.

In 1694 the Dowager Czarine Natalia Kirillovna died, and Peter again went to Archangel. On returning thence he gave a great mock battle, known as 'Kojoohovski's campaign.' 'And although at that time,' wrote Peter, 'we thought of little else than martial games, they, notwithstanding, predicted real events.' One of them was an expedition to Azoph during the summer of 1695; for war with Turkey had commenced while Sophia was regent, on account of alliance between that country and Poland, and hostilities still continued. After sending the boyarine Boris Petrovitch Sheremetev with a large force from Moscow and Little Russian Cossacks against the Crimea by the lower Dnieper, Peter himself, at the head of another army, went by water along the Moskva, the Oka, and the Volga to Tzaritzine, thence by land to the Don, and finally along that stream 1694—Death of Natalia Kirillovna.



to Azoph. The army was despatched under command of three generals—Golovine, Lefort, and Gordon—who decreed all together, with consent of the ‘Bombardier Peter Alexéev of the Preobrajenski regiment,’ for so Peter was called in the army. In the fleet he was named ‘Boatswain.’

But the campaign was disastrous to the Russians from the inexperience of the leaders, and also from want of proper engineers. Excavations made caused more damage to the Moscovite army than to the Turks. Storming was undertaken prematurely without unison in movement; so that finally Peter resolved to raise the siege and return to Moscow in the month of November. But the greatness of a remarkable man like Peter is even more apparent in failure, because it did not reduce him to despair. He was only stimulated to greater activity. By Peter’s orders, during one winter no fewer than thirty-four vessels were built at Voronej. In Moscow, on purpose for them, he organised a marine regiment of which Lefort was nominated admiral, while the generalissimus of the land armies was the boyarine Alexei Lemeonovitch Shein.

1696.

1696-1725—  
Reign of Peter  
the Great  
alone.

After the death of Ioann Alexéevitch, elder stepbrother of Peter (in 1696), the latter reigned alone. Soon afterwards he went to Voronej, whence he wrote, although then a sovereign autocrat and sole occupant of the throne—‘And we, according to the command of God, and like our first parent Adam, eat bread in the sweat of our brow.’ In April the army moved from Voronej. ‘Peter Alexéev’ was now promoted to the rank of captain, and commanded his own vessel. The newly-created Russian fleet obstructed the course of the Turks to Azoph. During the day Peter conducted the siege and threw the bombs himself. He spent the night on board his own vessel, and from it remarked the Turkish fleet. ‘Sister,’ wrote he to the Czarevna Natalia Alexéevna, ‘Thou writest in thy letter that I should not go near the shots and cannon-balls, but they come near me! Order them not to do so!’

On seeing help come from no quarter, and in despair at the courage of the Zaporog Cossacks and those of the Don, the inhabitants of Azoph capitulated on July 19. After repairing the fortifications of Azoph, Peter returned victorious to Moscow, which he entered by the building erected for the occasion, and still known as ‘The Triumphal Gate.’

#### SHIPBUILDING COMPANIES, 1696

But Peter did not long rest after the expedition to Azoph. In November it was decided in the imperial council that clergy possessing land on which were eight thousand peasants’ families, and lay proprietors on whose ground were ten thousand, should build one vessel rigged and armed, while traders and inhabitants



of suburbs were to build twelve vessels for bombarding. Consequently proprietors, or holders of land, were obliged to appear in Moscow in order to decide with whom to build vessels or to form 'shipbuilding companies.' Dockyards were made at Voronej, while workmen were summoned from Venice, Denmark, Sweden, and Holland. As a spot for a haven, on the Sea of Azoph, Taganrog was chosen. A proposal was made to unite the Volga and the Don by a canal (between Ilovlei and Kameeishinko). Finally, in order that with time the Russians might become good sailors, Peter sent fifty young 'spalniki' and 'stolniki' to Venice, England, and Holland, there to learn shipbuilding and the art of steering vessels.

#### THE ORGANISATION OF A GREAT EMBASSADE, 1696

But the energetic Peter could not be satisfied with merely sending youths abroad in order to learn arts and sciences. That system had already been known in Russia. He longed himself to see and judge of Western civilisation. He had no time to wait till those sent to foreign lands returned enlightened by knowledge. He was in a hurry, and could brook no delay. Moreover, Lefort kept constantly urging that Peter should see the marvels of civilisation in western Europe: and Peter's ardent imagination responded to the suggestion.

Accordingly, towards the close of 1696 it was decided that a great plenipotentary embassy, composed of Generals Golooine and Lefort, along with a state secretary, Voznizine, should go abroad to various courts—such as those of the empire of England, Denmark, Rome, Brandenburg, Holland, and Venice. The suite of the embassy was composed of nobles and volunteers. Amongst the latter was one named Peter Michaelov, *i.e.* the sovereign himself.

During his absence, the government of Russia was confided to three noble-1696-1697. men—Leo Kirillovitch Narishkine, Prince Boris Alexéevitch Golitzine, and Prince Peter Ivanovitch Prozorovski. Moscow was assigned to the command of Prince Feodor Yourievitch Prozorovski. Under command of another Prince Romodonovski—Michael Grigorievitch—an army was moved towards the Lithuanian frontiers. In Poland, King John Sobieski had died; so the election of his successor had commenced. Russia, and its ally Austria, opposed the election of the French Prince Conti, in alliance with the sultan. Romodonovski, in case of need, was to act powerfully against France and its party.

#### CONSPIRACY OF TSECKLER, 1697

In February 1697, when all was prepared for the departure of the great 1697. embassy, news reached Peter that an attempt on his life had been made by

Tseekler, Lokovnine, and Poushkine. The recent sedition had turned Tseekler's hot head. At first he had been an ardent partisan of Sophia. Notwithstanding, he eventually was one of the first to go over to Peter's side, in 1689. But at this period (*i.e.* 1697), chilled by Peter's coldness, Tseekler was ready to enact the part of Razine, or, in other words, to spread revolt among the Don Cossacks; and, along with them, to devastate Moscow. However, along with Tseekler were persons of distinction, such as Lokovnine and Poushkine, who maintained that Peter had ruined them all, and would send them beyond the seas. There were also Cossacks who wished to sack Moscow at one extremity, while strelitz did so at another.

#### PETER'S JOURNEY ABROAD, 1697-1698

1697-1698.

After the execution of Tseekler and his like-minded associates, the great embassy left Moscow in the month of March. At Riga, before which, not long previously, the forces of Alexei Michaelovitch had stood, the Swedish commander looked with an evil eye on the embassy, and would not allow Peter to see the fortifications of the town. This greatly exasperated him. However, a different reception awaited the young sovereign from the duke of Courland and the elector of Brandenburg, who gave him royal entertainment, in spite of his incognito. As for Sophia Charlotte, electress of Hanover, and her daughter Sophia, electress of Brandenburg, these princesses, in their epistolary correspondence, describe their impressions of the young Russian sovereign.

It was at the town of Coppenburg (not far from Hanover) that Peter paid them a visit. It is thus that both express themselves concerning him:—

‘Peter of Russia is very tall of stature, well made, and remarkably good-looking. He is endued with great vivacity of mind. His answers are prompt and concise. But in spite of the brilliant qualities which Nature has accorded him, he is deficient in polite manners. Had he received a better education, he would be a perfect man.’

‘The Moscovites, when dancing with us, imagined that the springs of our stays were our bones; and Peter was heard to remark: “These German women have devilishly hard bones!”’

‘These remarks were occasioned by Peter's inability to restrain himself, his rude habits, and want of refinement.’ (Soloviev, p. 247; Ilovaiski, p. 244.)

On reaching Holland, Peter remained there for several months. He stopped at the town of Sardam, or Zardam. There, by the name of Peter Michaelov, he was inscribed as a shipbuilding carpenter at the wharf, where he was daily seen working with an axe in his hand. But he was not long allowed to do so in

peace. News quickly spread at Sardam that the young Moscovite carpenter was none other than the reigning sovereign himself. Accordingly, he was soon annoyed by the officious curiosity of crowds who came to gaze at him.

After remaining a week at Sardam, he removed to Amsterdam. In that town, for four months, he worked at the wharf of the East India Company, along with his companions—volunteers of the Russian embassy.

In order to complete his knowledge of shipbuilding, Peter, in 1698, went to England. There, for more than two months, he applied himself to that art in the small town of Deptford, and took sixty different pupils and artisans into the Russian service. As regarded sailors, he specially chose them in Holland. On quitting England, King William gave Peter a yacht and also a model of a vessel containing one hundred and twenty cannons. In that yacht, *The Royal Transport*, Peter returned to Holland, and there spent the greater part of his time on board. The Russian sovereign next wended his steps to Vienna. In that capital, after obtaining a promise from the Emperor Leopold that he would endeavour to conclude peace with Turkey, Peter resolved to go to Venice, in order there to continue the study of shipbuilding. But, instead of doing so, he was obliged to hasten back to Moscow; for news came that a revolt had suddenly broken out among the strelitz.

### CHAPTER III

REVOLT OF THE STRELITZ, 1698—PETER'S RETURN FROM ABROAD—SHAVING OF THE BEARD AND CHANGE OF DRESS—INVESTIGATION OF THE STRELITZ—JOHN REINHOLD PATKUL

THE strelitz, whom Sophia Alexéevna had vainly endeavoured to revolt in 1689 when they were living quietly in Moscow, rose in rebellion during the year 1698, and invited Sophia to fill the throne. This was especially the case when they were sent to undertake any distant, arduous expedition. Four regiments, removed from Azoph to the Lithuanian frontiers and to Veleeki Looki (government of Pskov), loudly murmured. 'What is our service?' said they. 'We suffer from the boyards and rove about among them, for the third year.' Accordingly, two hundred strelitz fled to Moscow. But they were driven thence by soldiers, and returned to the regiments, with a letter from the Czarevna Sophia Alexéevna. 'Now you are badly off,' wrote the princess, 'and afterwards you will be still worse. Go to Moscow, in order that you may succeed. Nothing is heard of Peter.'

1698—Revolt of the strelitz.



Agitation was then visible in the armies. It was also reported that the sovereign had died abroad; that the boyards wished to make away with his son, the Czarevitch Alexei Petrovitch; finally, that it was necessary to go to Moscow—to defeat the boyards, to overcome the Germans, likewise to destroy the so-called ‘German Village.’ During spring the strelitz were removed to Toropetz (government of Pskov). Thence each regiment was ordered to occupy a different town. As for fugitives, they were sent into exile. But the strelitz thereupon broke out into open rebellion. They seized arms, cannons, drove away commanding officers, and, in their stead, chose strelitz. Finally, all moved towards Moscow. (Soloviev, p. 248.)

The rebels were met by the boyarine Shein, and by the Scotsman, General Patrick Gordon, who on June 18 encountered the strelitz near the Voskresenski monastery (or the so-called ‘New Jerusalem’), on the banks of the Istra. It was in vain that their leaders were urged to submit. The strelitz, in reply, enumerated their services, their sufferings during marches, etc. They, moreover, feared Prince Rodomonovski, who ordered them to be beat, none knew wherefore. Besides, the report was current that Germans were marching against Moscow—‘Germans who followed the customs of using tobacco<sup>1</sup> and of shaving the beard—to the utter violation of all decorum.’ Whereupon the commanders of the army ordered the artillery to act; and, after four discharges, the broken ranks of the strelitz, without any proper leader, dispersed in terror. Not only so: nearly all the rebels were caught. Then investigation commenced. Torture was inflicted; one hundred and thirty individuals were hanged; while the rest were imprisoned in various towns and monasteries.

#### PETER'S RETURN FROM ABROAD

Meanwhile Peter returned from travelling in foreign countries. After there witnessing the marvels of civilisation in western Europe, his great desire was to introduce that civilisation in his own empire. To accomplish that important aim, it was, however, essential that Russia should hold intimate intercourse with the West. In a word, it became necessary to accomplish the project of Ioann IV., or to obtain at least one haven of the Baltic Sea. On the way from Vienna to Moscow, Peter, in Galicia, met the new king of Poland, Augustus II., elector of Saxony, and communicated to him the intention of Russia to make war on Sweden.

<sup>1</sup> We have already mentioned that the use of tobacco had been strictly prohibited during the reign of Michael Feodorovitch (1613-1645).

### SHAVING OF THE BEARD AND CHANGE OF DRESS

Peter reached Moscow, August 25, 1698. The next day he ordered the 1698. nobles to shave their beards. This was the first, and for many the most difficult, step in the way of separation from the past; for the beard was the sign of the old party, which waged war with beardless foreigners, intercourse with whom Peter deemed essential. The nobles, and in general those at court, were forced to remove that honourable adornment. It was left only to the clergy and to peasants. As for those belonging to other conditions, they paid a tax for the right of wearing a beard. The shaving of the beard dealt a powerful blow to that narrow nationality especially attached to external trifles which distinguish one people from another—a nationality, moreover, which hindered the progress of enlightenment. Accordingly, to such persons the shaving of the beard was considered in the same light as persecuting the sectarians called the ‘Raskolniks,’ or Old Believers, because the latter placed all their hope of salvation in the use of old books for church service, as well as the observance of old rites and customs. It is needless to add, such individuals thought that to shave the beard was a mortal sin. At the same time, those in service, as also citizens, were ordered to change their dress—a long, flowing Asiatic attire—and to adopt the garb of European nations. From the commencement of the eighteenth century, Peter also decreed that the new year should be celebrated, not on September 1, as had hitherto been the case in Russia, but on the 1st of January, as in other European countries. At a still earlier epoch, the new year in Russia was celebrated on the 1st of March.

### INVESTIGATION OF THE STRELITZ, 1698-1699

Of course, all these sudden changes caused the greatest discontent and loud 1698-1699. murmurs among the people. Peter was, moreover, dissatisfied with Shein’s investigations of the strelitz, near the Voskresenski monastery, and commenced them again, accompanied by the most hideous tortures. Peter was also convinced that his sister Sophia had been guilty, although that was not proved when Shein investigated the culprits. (See Soloviev, p. 249.) All the strelitz dispersed in prisons of towns and monasteries were sent to Moscow. Sophia and her sister, the Princess Marfa Alexéevna, were publicly accused. In order to pronounce their sentence, Peter chose judges from among different classes of society. Sophia and Marfa were forced to take the veil. The strelitz who had participated in the revolt were executed, except those under age. In fact, the armies of the strelitz were gradually abolished.

Ilovaïski (p. 246) narrates that when, in public parts of Moscow, gibbets were erected, the patriarch Adrian appeared before Peter, with an image of the Virgin, and implored mercy for the condemned. Peter, highly incensed, replied : 'Wherefore hast thou removed that holy image? Withdraw, and put it again in its place! Know that I honour God and the Blessed Virgin not less than thou dost: but know also that it is my duty to protect the people and to punish evil-doers.'

'The bodies of the executed strelitz remained on the place of punishment for five months, to the terror of the people. The Red (or Beautiful) Square was strewn with headless corpses, and the walls of the so-called white and earth towns were lined with the bodies of those who had been hanged. At the Devitché Polé (Maidens' Field) were strung up several strelitz, holding petitions in their hands, before the windows of the apartments of the Princess Sophia Alexéevna.

In 1699, Peter's consort, Evdokia (pronounce Yevdokeeia) Feodorovna, was forced to take the veil, in the Pokrovski monastery of Souzdal. There she was named Elena. Peter, from his education and unsettled habits, could not become accustomed to domestic life. He was constantly at work, and only sought recreation in the society of his gay companions, among whom were Lefort and other foreigners. Evdokia too, was unable to exert any influence on her husband; for she had been brought up in strict seclusion, and had, besides, adopted the antiquated ideas then prevalent in Russia. Thus the tastes and habits of husband and wife were at total variance. Not only so: Evdokia could not be pleased with Peter's mode of life, spent away from his family. Moreover, she did not conceal her discontent. Peter was accordingly much irritated, and the result was—a divorce.

#### JOHN REINHOLD PATKUL

1699.

After concluding investigations regarding the strelitz, Peter set out for Vorong. During his absence, François Lefort died (February 1699). Peter already found vessels built in Voronej by the so-called 'companies'; and, during the spring of 1699, he sailed along the Don to the sea. In August he sent his own ambassador, Ookraintzus, in a Russian vessel to Constantinople, in order there to hold friendly intercourse with the Turks. They, however, were surprised, not to say terrified, by this proceeding. Peter, notwithstanding, hastened to terminate war with Turkey; for he was about to commence a struggle with Sweden, and was urged to do so by the famous Patkul.

John Reinhold Patkul was a Livonian gentleman. When Charles XI. occupied



the Swedish throne, a decree was issued, in virtue of which all crown land granted by the documents of former kings was to be taken from the nobility, and that decree extended to Livonia also. Not only was this the case: the knights of that province were ordered to deliver up the documents entitling them to hold their ancient possessions; and these documents were not easily found. Whereupon the Livonian knights began to murmur loudly, and to oppose the confiscation or 'reduction' of their estates, according to the expression of the times. One of the most zealous upholders of the knights was Captain Patkul, a man of brilliant qualities, well educated, exclusively devoted to the interests of his own class, ardent, decided, unwearied in pursuing the aim he had in view. The bold defence of his cause, and the means he employed to further it in Livonia, gave great offence at Stockholm. To that was joined the hatred of an enemy who did all in his power to injure Patkul. We allude to Gastfer, governor-general of Riga. Consequently Patkul was summoned to Stockholm and delivered up to judgment. On seeing that the judges were determined to accuse him as a criminal of state, Patkul fled from Sweden, where, sure enough, he was condemned to death. As a fugitive, he avoided the pursuit of the Swedish government; and by feigned family names he roved about from one country of Europe to another. There he studied sciences, and especially he formed a plan by which Livonia was to be delivered from the dominion of Sweden. That plan was proposed by Patkul to Augustus, king of Poland, and consisted in the project that Poland, Russia, and Denmark should at one and the same time take up arms against Sweden. Poland was to obtain for itself the restoration of Livonia and Esthonia; Russia was to obtain Ingria and Carelia; Denmark, the possession of Holstein-Gottorp, whose duke was married to Ulrica Eleonora, sister of the young Swedish king, Charles XII.

## CHAPTER IV

FROM THE COMMENCEMENT OF THE NORTHERN WAR TILL THE VICTORY OF POLTAVA,  
1701-1709—SUBSEQUENT EVENTS, 1710-1711—DEFEAT OF THE RUSSIANS AT  
NARVA, 19TH NOVEMBER 1701

AT the beginning of the eighteenth century, great changes had taken place in northern Europe. A new order of things had appeared.

At that epoch Peter the Great reigned in Russia, and Charles XII. occupied the throne of Sweden. Both possessed extraordinary talent and an inflexible will. But the chief difference between them was that while the will of Peter

was guided by reason, the will of Charles, on the contrary, was too often influenced by individual passion. Both aimed at mighty deeds: but while those of Peter were directed by calculation and according to the means of his empire, Charles frequently thought only of executing his plans in spite of difficulty, and even if unable to surmount it. So striking a contrast in the dispositions of these two monarchs was sufficient to decide the fate of their respective kingdoms, and did, in fact, do so.

By the aid of Russia, but contrary to the desire of France, Augustus II., elector of Saxony, had been chosen king of Poland. Luxury, corrupt morals, religious persecution, and the cruel yoke which enslaved the people, reduced Poland to utter weakness. For these reasons it was that the Poles, in spite of all their efforts, could undertake no decided part in northern Europe. Prussia at this epoch appeared as a kingdom; and the new state gave indications of future glory. The Danish throne was meanwhile occupied by the courageous Frederick IV., whose efforts to obtain the duchy of Holstein-Gottorp frequently disturbed the peace of Denmark.

Such was the state of things in northern Europe, where a war broke out which lasted twenty years. No wonder that it occurred and that the struggle continued so long, for monarchs like Peter I. and Charles XII., the chief actors in the war, were not soon discouraged. Besides, the reasons which occasioned the war were alike important to all the kingdoms which participated in the contest.

War with  
Sweden.

Peter, to the full extent, felt the disadvantages of the peace of Stolbov. He saw perfectly well that while Russia did not command in the Baltic and Black Seas it would always remain an Asiatic rather than a European state. Encouraged by his success in war with Turkey, he resolved to extort from Sweden the ancient possessions of Russia, or the regions near the Gulf of Finland. To establish his power in the Baltic Sea—thereby to elevate Russia to the condition of a western European state, thus to open up new, necessary, numerous outlets for its commerce—such were the designs of Peter. Meanwhile his passion for all concerning the sea was favoured by external circumstances.

The Poles had raised the elector of Saxony, Augustus II., to the throne, on one condition, among others, namely, that he would annex to Poland its former province, Livonia. At first sight this seemed in no wise a difficult undertaking; for the Livonians were highly discontented with the Swedish government. Augustus entered fully into the views of Patkul, and sent an ambassador to Moscow, in order to urge Peter's alliance against Sweden; and tempted him by the perspective of advantageous acquisitions on the shores of the Baltic.



Peter was, of course, in no wise indifferent to the persuasion. He with joy agreed to an alliance which he himself had previously proposed to Augustus. Peter, however, intimated that he would only begin war with Sweden when he had made peace with Turkey. During the spring of 1700, the kings of Denmark and Poland began war with Sweden. In July, Ookraintzev, the Russian ambassador, succeeded in concluding peace with Turkey for thirty years. Azoph, with all its old and new fortifications, remained to Russia, while the Crimean khan renounced his claims to the annual present of remembrance, hitherto sent to him from Moscow. On August 18, Peter learned that peace with Turkey had been concluded. Next day he issued a manifesto to intimate war with Sweden, and ordered his army to march forward to besiege Narva. Peter, however, took up arms against Sweden when both his allies, the kings of Denmark and Poland, had already suffered defeat. At this time Frederick of Denmark was endeavouring to conquer Holstein. Charles XII., in May, appeared before Copenhagen, and Frederick, in order to save his capital, was obliged to sign peace at Traveodal (18th August), by which he abandoned alliance with Russia and Poland, acknowledged the independence of Holstein, and paid to Sweden the expenses of the war. Having thus finished with Denmark, Charles next proceeded to Livonia. News of his approach caused a panic; and Augustus of Poland immediately raised the siege of Riga. But Charles for a time left that enemy, and advanced towards Narva against the Russians. The forces of the latter amounted to from thirty-five to forty thousand men, chiefly raw recruits of the previous year, and commanded by the Duke de Croix, whom Peter had taken into his service, on the recommendation of the Emperor Leopold. Charles XII. had a force of about eight thousand five hundred men. He, moreover, tried by sudden movement to throw the Russians into confusion, the rather that they had no confidence in their foreign commander.

On November 19th, during a terrible snowstorm and drift, Charles soon appeared before the Russian force, repulsed the inexperienced crowd, and seized the artillery. The foreign officers and generals hastened to deliver themselves up as prisoners; for they dreaded to be killed by the exasperated Russian soldiers. Among other prisoners were the Duke de Croix and Prince Dolgorookov. Only two regiments of the guards—the Preobrajenski and the Limeonovski—kept their ground against the Swedes till night was advanced. Charles then held conference with the Russian generals. He also promised to liberate the Russian armies, along with cannons and standards, but that promise was not entirely kept. The Russians lost six thousand men.

1701, Novem-  
ber 19—  
Defeat at  
Narva.

On hearing of the defeat, Peter exclaimed: 'I know that the Swedes will yet



conquer us more than once; for they are our teachers in the art of war; but with time we will repay them for their teaching.'

Peter, moreover, was not offended by the mockery of the Swedes, and was glad that Charles liberated eighteen thousand Russians, taken prisoners before Narva, from contempt of them. Peter then proposed peace to Charles on condition that Ingria should be ceded to Russia. But Charles replied that he would hold conference concerning peace, in Moscow. 'My brother Charles,' said Peter, 'acts the Alexander of Macedonia; but I hope that in me he will not find a Darius Codoman.'

Peter's dread that Charles would penetrate to the interior of Russia, after the defeat of Narva, was, however, not realised; for Charles wended his way to Poland, intending there to depose Augustus from the throne. Peter, meanwhile, reorganised his armies, and ordered extra bells of monasteries to be melted into cannons. But his desire that other states would co-operate with Russia was not granted. Denmark would in no wise consent to violate the peace of Travendal, while the Poles declared that they would only form alliance with Russia if it ceded to them Kiev and Smolensk. Such demands were of course impossible. Peter accordingly was reduced to seek help in himself alone. Thus hostilities were renewed.

1702.

Field-marshal Sheremetev twice defeated the Swedes, commanded by General Slippenbach. And while Peter was fortifying the mouth of the northern Dvina, in order to defend Archangel from a dreaded attack of the Swedes, Sheremetev entered Livonia and took possession of Marienburg. The conquest of that town is remarkable in Russian history, because, amongst the scenes of bloodshed which there ensued, a young woman named Martha Skovronskaia was made prisoner; and she was destined by Providence to a singular fate. After embracing the Russo-Greek faith, she was known as Ekaterina Alexéevna, eventually became the second consort of Peter the Great, and subsequent to his death (1725) was Catherine I., reigning empress of Russia. Peter married her in 1707. In 1712 (6th March) he solemnly acknowledged her as his consort. In 1724 (7th May), she was declared empress and crowned in Moscow. As Peter's consort, Catherine participated in all his labours and expeditions, while, at the same time, she possessed the happiest influence over him, by soothing his irritability during the periodical convulsions from which he suffered. To this subject we shall, however, revert in a subsequent chapter.

SUCCESS OF THE RUSSIANS IN LIVONIA—FOUNDATION OF ST. PETERSBURG,  
16TH MAY 1703

But the growing fame of Peter exposed him to many new trials; for at one and 1701-1702. the same time he was forced to carry on a double struggle, first, against outward enemies, compared with whom he so soon showed his great superiority, and then again with still more dangerous inward foes, averse to all innovation, and eager to spread discontent among the people. Yet Peter did not lose courage. On the contrary, he at once used every means to ensure a more successful continuation of the war. And circumstances even aided him to do so; for Charles, after leaving Slippenbach with a small force to defend Livonia, himself advanced against his third enemy, Augustus of Poland, and remained some years in the territories of the latter kingdom. Peter meanwhile made the best use of the interval, 'while the Swedes were sticking fast in Poland,' as he expressed himself. Nearly the whole of 1701 passed in insignificant skirmishes on both sides. Only, in December, Sheremetev attacked the chief force of Slippenbach and defeated it, at the village of Erestfer. During the summer of 1702, Sheremetev, promoted to the rank of field-marshal for the victory at Erestfer, overcame Slippenbach a second time, near the farm of Humelshof, after which the Russians frightfully devastated the whole of eastern Livonia. A report was then spread that the Swedes wished to seize Archangel, the only port the Russians possessed in a European sea. So Peter hastened to defend Archangel. However, the report proved false. Then Peter moved onwards from Archangel towards the spot where former Russian possessions were adjacent to the sea, but where, at this epoch, the Swedish banner waved on old Russian fortifications. Peter besieged Noteburg the (ancient Novgorodian Oreshok), took it (October 11), and called it Schlüsselburg (key-town), for the stronghold, built at the source of the river Neva from Lake Ladoga, is, in reality, as a key to the sea. The entrance to the Gulf of Finland was defended by a small fort named Neuschantz, on the right bank of the Neva. On May 1 the fort was taken, razed to the ground, and in its stead, May 16, 1703, was founded a new fortress, near the mouth of the Neva, and the so-called Lust Island (Island of Pleasure), which now forms the part of St. Petersburg, called 'the Petersburg side.' That fortress was, in reality, St. Petersburg, the new capital of Russia.

The latter had thus eventually reached the sea, towards which it had been aiming for so many years. In order to defend the newly-founded maritime town from the side of the sea, Peter built the fort of Kronslot, on a sandbank near the island of Kottline, which shut the entrance to the mouth of the Neva. On that



1704.

low-lying island and around it was subsequently raised the fortress of Cronstadt. For the new Baltic fleet a wharf was built at Olonetz. Two remaining Russian towns were taken from the Swedes, Koporié and Iam. The latter was named Iamburg. In 1704 Dorpat (now called Youriev) and Narva were also taken.

There was only one fisherman's hut on Lust Island when the new fort was founded there.

The new capital was placed under the special protection of St. Peter, and from him was called St. Petersburg.

All of a sudden, the bleak deserted region at the mouth of the Neva disappeared, as if by the touch of a magic wand. The country became enlivened and changed. The thick forests were removed, the surrounding marshes drained. In order to erect the fort, twenty thousand men, summoned from all parts of the empire, were daily at work. But Peter himself wished to superintend all. So he lived in a small adjacent wooden house, with two rooms, like those he had inhabited at Sardam. The small dwelling above mentioned still exists. The first occupants of the new town were those who had lived in the ruined Swedish fort of Neuschantz. From Kalooga, Mojaïsk, and Vereia (government of Moscow) came Russian merchants. Already, in November 1703, appeared in the mouth of the Neva the first foreign (Dutch) vessel, with a cargo of wine and salt. Greatly delighted, Peter went to meet the vessel, and himself acted as harbour-pilot. When the vessel reached the haven, no duty was charged for the cargo. Peter then made presents to the owner of the vessel and to all the sailors. With equal gladness he also welcomed other foreign vessels, and allowed their crews to treat him to wine and coffee.

The first victory over the Swedes at sea was gained about the same time as the foundation of St. Petersburg. The Swedish fleet, not yet aware that Neuschantz had been taken, approached the mouth of the Neva, and sent beforehand two vessels there to cast anchor. Peter, however, had yet no vessels ready on the Neva. He accordingly placed his guardsmen in boats during the night, suddenly sailed along with them towards the Swedish vessels, and at dawn attacked them. After a brave defence, both frigates were captured. Peter was unusually pleased with this exploit, his first success in the Baltic Sea, and himself wrote concerning it to his companions-in-arms, 'to congratulate them on the occasion of this new victory, such as had never yet occurred.'

Peter, moreover, allowed himself to be rewarded for the success, and received the insignia of the order of St. Andrew from the hands of the Admiral Count Golovine.

The foundation of St. Petersburg and the fort of Cronstadt occasioned alarm



in Sweden and also in western Europe. The Swedes particularly began to perceive with grief that Russia was destined one day to crush their might. The English and other nations urged Charles XII. no longer to despise the Russians; but he heeded no such suggestions. His great aim was to depose Augustus from the Polish throne.

Ilovaiski narrates (p. 248) that when, in 1704, the Russians by storm took Narva, at which they had been defeated in 1701, excited by victory the soldiers began to plunder and to murder in the conquered town. They were with difficulty restrained by Peter and his generals. Subsequently, on entering the burgo-master's house, Peter threw his blood-stained sword upon the table and exclaimed: 'Do not be afraid! That is not Swedish, but Russian blood, shed for your defence!'

Meanwhile, Charles was constantly continuing to turn about in the direction of Augustus. The latter was a precious ally of Peter, not certainly on account of any help given in war; for the moment the Swedes appeared in one corner, Augustus fled to another. But, at all events, he detained Charles in Poland, and that was in Peter's favour. The Swedish king would in no wise make peace with Augustus, but was determined that he should be deposed, that his place should be filled by another, favourable to Sweden, and then Charles hoped to terminate war with Russia and to sign peace with Peter in Moscow. Patkul, displeased with Augustus, had entered the service of Peter, and in the capacity of Russian imperial minister was at the court of Poland. Part of the nobles went over to the side of Charles. The remainder continued to uphold Augustus. At length Charles forced the diet to depose Augustus, and to choose Stanislaw Leschinski, voevode of Poznan, as king of Poland. But even then, Charles did not attain his aim; for Leschinski displeased many, and Augustus still continued to maintain his position in Poland.

In order to maintain his ally, Peter, during the spring of 1705, moved his forces towards the western Dvina. He crossed that river, and took Courland and Vilna. His chief force, of about 35,000 men, was concentrated at Grodno, where a large fortified camp was organised. But at the very moment when the struggle at the west was becoming more and more important, Peter was obliged to withdraw part of his troops to the south-east, to Astrachan, where revolt had broken out.

A certain individual named Stephen, son of a strelitz, had fled from Moscow to Astrachan. There, for the space of three years, he had excited discontent by circulating the most absurd reports. He confidently affirmed that very arduous service and a new religion were to be introduced. By the latter, the worship of

idols was to take place. The Russian empire was to be divided into four parts, and all Russian girls were to be given in marriage to Germans. In order to prevent such things, it accordingly became necessary that all Germans should be put to death. The inhabitants of Astrachan were the more excited, because they had suffered not a little from the avidity and violence of those in authority. This had especially been the case when orders were given to change the old fashion of dress for the new.

1706. On July 29, no fewer than a hundred weddings took place, from the dread of being obliged to give daughters in marriage to Germans. During the night of the 30th, a revolt broke out. The rebels rushed to the fort, killed the voevode and several officers, and sent documents summoning the Cossacks to rise in arms. Peter at once sent Field-marshal Sheremetev against the rebels. He took possession of Astrachan on March 13, 1706, after a fierce engagement. And at the same time, Charles, making use of winter roads, suddenly moved from Warsaw to Grodno, and cut off the Russian army from the spot whence supplies were expected. All hope of aid from allies had forsaken the Russians, because General Shulenberg, commander of the Saxon and Russian troops on the borders of Poland and Silesia, had suffered complete defeat from the Swedes at Fraustadt.

Peter's dejected state of mind at this epoch is seen from his letters. 'O God!' wrote he, during the spring of 1706, and before the Sunday of St. Lazarus (March 25)—'O God! add a little weight to our scale; for without that, it cannot be balanced! We, along with the approaching festival of St. Lazarus, are in a hell of terrible grief! Grant, O Lord, that we may rise to life again like him!'

1706—Peace of Altranstedt. But although Peter felt all the difficulty of his position, he did not despair. He sent instructions to his army in Grodno how to retreat; and, thanks to his plan, the army reached Kiev with little loss. Charles then quitted the marshes of Lithuania, turned again to the west, and marched towards Saxony, there to deal Augustus a final blow in his hereditary domains. And the calculation of Charles was correct. In order to save Saxony, Augustus, in September 1706, concluded peace with the Swedish king at Altranstedt, by which he (Augustus) renounced the crown of Poland in favour of Stanislaw Leschinski,<sup>1</sup> broke off alliance with Russia, and was not ashamed to deliver up the unhappy Patkul to the Swedes. This took place without Peter's consent, and contrary to his expectation. Charles then condemned Patkul as a traitor. He had a horrible death, and was broken on the wheel. Augustus concluded the peace of Altran-

<sup>1</sup> Voevode of Poznan.



stedt in secret from the Russians, and was even beside Menshikov's army when that favourite of Peter (October 18) defeated the Swedish general Mardefeld at Kalish.

CHARLES APPROACHES THE BOUNDARIES OF RUSSIA—REVOLT OF CONRAD  
BOOLAVINE, 1707-1708

After concluding the peace of Altranstedt, Charles had but one remaining 1706-1708. foe, Peter. The latter, meanwhile, although preparing for defence, notwithstanding used every means to make peace. He sought the intervention of foreign powers. He even consented to be satisfied with only one haven at the Baltic Sea. Charles, however, would not yield a single point. He wished to conclude peace in Moscow; and as Peter trusted little to the success of war, he sent orders to fortify that capital. Towards the close of 1707 Charles crossed the Vistula. In January 1708 he occupied Grodno, and aimed at overtaking the Russian forces then placed in Lithuania. They, according to Peter's plan, constantly retreated from the boundaries and devastated the country through which they passed, in order to prevent it from furnishing supplies to the enemy. But at the very moment when Russia was straining every nerve to prepare for a terrible struggle, a great revolt (like that of Razine) took place among the Cossacks of the Don.

Soloviev (p. 255) makes the following remarks, which appear surprising to a reader of the present day :—'The epoch when Peter the Great occupied the throne of Russia, and which, seen by us from the far distance, seems so brilliant, was, notwithstanding, in reality very onerous to the people. In order to maintain prolonged, difficult war, and at the same time to introduce new organisation, great sacrifices were demanded, while the means of the country were scanty. The frequent recruiting told heavily upon the population. Taxes, too, were oppressive. Accordingly, to escape from both, a whole crowd of discontented individuals, as in old times, fled to the Don, to join the Cossacks there. The result of this was that the position of those who remained became still worse.'

Peter, of course, could not see all that with indifference; so towards the close of 1707 he sent a commander, Prince Youree Vladimirovitch Dolgorookov, to the Don, with orders to seek out fugitives and to send them back again to their former dwellings. Dolgorookov sought out three thousand fugitives. But at that very time, a document was issued among the Cossacks, urging them in no wise to allow Dolgorookov to enact the part of a catch-poll. Agitation then began. A large gang of the so-called 'hungry Cossacks' assembled around Conrad Boolavine, elder of Bachmoot, who suddenly, during the night, attacked Dol-



gorookov's detachment, and destroyed it along with its leader. Boolavine was, however, soon afterwards defeated by the loyal Cossacks, sent against him by the ataman Maximov, and then fled to the Zaporog Cossacks. From their encampment, during the spring of 1708, Boolavine appeared at the river Hoper (a tributary of the Don) and began to circulate seditious letters. They intimated that the Cossacks had risen in arms for the true Christian faith, and for their very orthodox sovereign, but against princes, boyards, and Germans, who were turning all aside from the veritable belief. Having assembled a large crowd of 'hungry Cossacks,' Boolavine defeated the imperial force and took possession of Tscherkask, chief town of the Cossacks;<sup>1</sup> there he put to death the ataman Maximov, along with other elders, and was himself proclaimed ataman. While Boolavine thus took law into his own hands, the leaders of different seditious gangs, such as Nekrasov, Hochlatch, etc., proceeded along the Volga. They took Saratov, Tsaritzine, and Kamuishine. Their associate Golii cut off the Soomski regiment and distributed seditious documents. He thus wrote: 'We have nothing to do with the lower orders; we have to do with the boyards. As for you "hungry Cossacks," come from all towns, on horseback and on foot, naked and with bare feet, you will have horses, arms, clothing, and wages in money!' The agitation extended even to Tambov. But the triumph of Boolavine was of short duration. His associate Dranii was defeated by the imperial forces, and perished in the action. Another detachment of the rebels was overcome before Azoph; and at the same time the leader of the imperial troops, Prince Vasili Vladimirovitch Dolgorookov, brother of the commander killed by Boolavine, approached Tscherkask. The Cossacks opposed to Boolavine then gained the ascendancy, and besieged him in his own house. Boolavine at first made a defence, but finally, on seeing the impossibility of longer doing so, shot himself (July). Tscherkask surrendered to Dolgorookov; but the revolt was not totally quelled till November, as Nekrasov and Golii had still to be overcome, because they yet continued hostilities on the upper Don, and Donetz Nekrasov was forced to flee. He went to the Kuban, along with two thousand Cossacks, and there submitted to the Crimean khan. Golii also took flight, after a total defeat. Dolgorookov at length completely destroyed the camps of rebel Cossacks. According to contemporary records: 'The chiefs of the insurgents and others who were caught were hanged in groups of ten. The gibbets were fastened to rafts, and the latter were floated along the Don. All neighbouring inhabitants were thus overawed, and were the more easily subdued.'

<sup>1</sup> In the regions of the Don. Another town, Tscherkasi, is in the government of Kiev.

BATTLES AT DOBRO AND LIESNO, 1708—IVAN STEPANOVITCH  
MAZEPPA—HIS TREACHERY

Meanwhile, during the summer of 1708, Charles defeated a detachment of Russians at Golovtschine, and occupied Mogilev: there he expected to be joined by Loevenhaupt, who was coming from Lithuania with large supplies. However, for want of provisions, Charles did not await Loevenhaupt, but advanced towards Mstislavl, through woods and marshes, along a devastated region, where, at the village of Dobro, part of his forces suffered defeat by the Russian commander, Prince Michael Michaelovitch Golitzine. In spite of his general's advice, Charles did not return to Mogilev to join Loevenhaupt, but wended his way towards Ukraine. Peter, meanwhile, profited by this movement. He pursued Loevenhaupt and defeated him at the village of Liesno, near Propoisk, at the river Soj (government of Mogilev), 28th September. The Swedes lost ten thousand men, besides their artillery, and, more than all, the whole of their provisions, which were so very important to Charles. 'There was the first trial of soldiers,' said Peter, 'because there, for the first time, Russians defeated Swedes with equal numbers.'

1708—Defeat  
of the Swedes  
at Dobro and  
Liesno.

Charles, after sacrificing the force of Loevenhaupt and the provisions, next hastened towards Little Russia.

Subsequent to Bogdan Hmelnitzki, there was not one Little Russian hetman who quietly finished his life while yet exercising the functions of hetmanship. Alexei Michaelovitch would not believe the denunciations brought against Vuigovski. Pooshkar fell a sacrifice to that unbelief, and Vuigovski betrayed. Youree Hmelnitzki also betrayed. Mnogogrieshni was convicted of treachery, and finished his days in exile. Samoilovitch was likewise thus convicted and had the same fate. Alexei Michaelovitch would not credit the accusations brought against Vuigovski, and afterwards repented of his unbelief. Concerning the affairs of Mnogogrieshni and Samoilovitch, the Moscovite government did give heed to the accusations. Then ensued complaints that these denunciations were false, and that government had punished its truest servants in order to please their enemies. Accordingly, the position of the Moscovite government regarding the hetmans became exceedingly embarrassing; and not less difficult was the position of the hetmans themselves. The hetman (or chief commander) was chosen in a noisy assembly of his partisans, who had gained the ascendancy; but his rivals and enemies sought every opportunity to injure him after his election, which had taken place contrary to their wishes. As a safeguard from their malice, the hetman usually surrounded himself by hired troops, composed of persons belonging



to every class of foreigners; and the latter excited the hatred of the Little Russians. As the hetman's enemies could not openly overcome him by force, they endeavoured to injure him in Moscow by there bringing accusations against him to the sovereign. The hetman was meanwhile between two fires. On the one hand were the demands of the Moscovite government, which exacted that Little Russians should participate in the general life of the state, by performing duties incumbent on all the other members of the population. On the other hand were the demands of the Cossacks, who wished to be as independent as possible of the government, and to perform few duties exacted by it. Such was the position of Samoilovitch's successor, Ivan Stepanovitch Mazeppa, an exceedingly clever, artful, well-educated old man, and a pleasant talker in company. A lover of worldly pleasure Mazeppa was also, and had passed through not a few adventures during his early youth.

According to Ilovaiski (p. 269, eighth edition), there is an account of Mazeppa, given by a Polish nobleman named Paska, in his notes. It seems that Mazeppa, when young, had served at the court of the Polish king, Ian Casimir. There Mazeppa had paid too much attention to the wife of a pan (nobleman), and thereby deeply incensed him. The nobleman seized Mazeppa, bound him naked to the back of a horse, and set it at liberty in the fields. The horse was a native of Ukraine, and wended its way towards that country; there the Cossacks found Mazeppa half-dead. Afterwards he disappeared for some time, and was heard of no more. But several years later he was seen in the army of the hetman Doroshenko. Mazeppa then betrayed Doroshenko, and devoted himself to the hetman Samoilovitch. In the house of the latter, Mazeppa taught the children, and by aid of Samoilovitch obtained the important post of military scribe. But Mazeppa betrayed Samoilovitch as he had betrayed others, and was even one of the chief causes of Samoilovitch's fall. The election of Mazeppa as hetman was accomplished by Prince Golitzine.

Peter was very fond of Mazeppa, and had full confidence in him notwithstanding all the denunciations brought against the old hetman (aged seventy years). It was reported that Mazeppa was trying to form Little Russia into a separate state, and to place it under the power of Sweden. Still, however, the denunciations, by their vagueness, only convinced Peter that Mazeppa had many enemies. And, sure enough, while the Swedish king was far away it did indeed seem strange to think that the clever Mazeppa would betray Peter.

Circumstances had, however, meanwhile changed. The victorious Charles had approached the Russian frontiers with the design of concluding peace in Moscow. Thus the deceitful old hetman could not resist temptation. Even Peter himself



did not consider the designs of Charles impossible. Hence orders were given to fortify the Russian capital. Mazeppa besides calculated that Peter, with his inexperienced forces, could never become conqueror in the struggle. Mazeppa, accordingly, began to hold intercourse with Charles and with the Polish king, Stanislaw Leschinski.

Ilovaiski states (p. 250-251, thirteenth edition) that the chief mediatrix in intercourse between Mazeppa and Leschinski was a certain Princess Dolski, an acquaintance of the hetman. In corresponding with the princess, Mazeppa for a lengthened period made use of very vague expressions, and awaited the result of circumstances. The princess, however, knew his weak side. Under pretext of friendship, she informed him that on one occasion, while at a banquet along with Field-marshal Sheremetev and another Russian general, they both told her that Menshikov was laying a snare for Mazeppa, wished to overthrow him and to be elected hetman of Ukraine in his stead. Mazeppa, alarmed, then became more accessible to Polish influence. Meanwhile Mazeppa's secret intercourse with the enemies of Russia was known to certain Cossack elders, and also to the general military, judge Kotchoobei. Vasili Leontievitch Kotchoobei had a daughter Matrena (pronounce Matriona), the hetman's goddaughter. Mazeppa was then a widower, and thought of marrying a second time. In spite of his advanced age, he made a proposal of marriage to Matrena Kotchoobei. Her parents, however, opposed it, because it was forbidden by the Russo-Greek church that a godfather should marry his goddaughter. But Matrena, either really attached to Mazeppa, or ambitious to become wife of a hetman, fled from her father's house to that of Mazeppa. And, although the latter sent back the young person to her parents, they notwithstanding considered themselves dishonoured, and henceforth became the hetman's bitterest enemies.

Vasili Leontievitch Kotchoobei, along with Iskra, formerly colonel at Poltava, accordingly denounced to Peter that Mazeppa was a traitor. But as the latter had faithfully served Russia for more than twenty years, Peter would believe no evil concerning him. Nay, more, Peter ordered Golovkine and Shafirov to examine Kotchoobei and Colonel Iskra by torture. Old Kotchoobei could not support the torments inflicted upon him, and confessed that he had denounced Mazeppa from malice, while Colonel Iskra also acknowledged that he had followed the suggestions of Kotchoobei. Subsequently both these offenders were sent to Mazeppa, whose camp was then pitched not far from Bielaia Tserkov (*i.e.* White Church, government of Kiev), and there they were publicly executed.

So Mazeppa, for this time, was saved from trouble; but his position became more and more difficult. For he was merely the sport of circumstances, and was

placed as a weak object between two powerful foes. From fear of the victorious Charles, Mazeppa held intercourse with him, yet was afraid to break off with Peter also, as only the entrance of the Swedes into Ukraine could save the traitor from imperial vengeance. Mazeppa, meanwhile, was obliged to promise Charles aid from the Cossacks, and notwithstanding wanted courage to persuade them to join the Swedes. But deceit and falsehood aided the base old man. In order to avoid commanding the troops, he feigned dangerous illness. During this interval Charles entered Ukraine. Mazeppa was then suddenly cured. He marched forward with a small detachment of troops devoted to him, crossed the Desna (October 26), declared his treachery, and on the 29th joined Charles. The greater part of the Cossacks, however, remained true to Peter. General Menshikov then stormed and took the hetman's capital, Batoorine. Mazeppa was anathematised; and his effigy was hanged by an executioner.

In Mazeppa's stead, Ivan Ilitch Skoropadski was chosen hetman. He soon afterwards issued a document in which he asked the Little Russians: 'What can we, orthodox Christians, expect from the king of Sweden? Is he not a foreigner and of a different religion? And even if he wished to defend us, how can he do so at a great distance from the Baltic Sea? And how can he be the defender of our church, since he is opposed to it?' These appeals to the common sense of the people did not remain without result; so that the Swedes, instead of being well received in Little Russia, were already exposed to a popular war. Sudden attacks were made on Swedish detachments. Their horses were carried off, and provisions were hidden. Two colonels, Apostol and Galagine, left Mazeppa and returned to Peter's side. Even Mazeppa himself, on seeing that his calculations were incorrect, began once more to hold intercourse with Peter, and promised him important information regarding the Swedish king. Peter accepted the proposal, and agreed to forget the past entirely. Mazeppa, however, found no opportunity to render Peter any important service, and accordingly remained beside Charles.

#### BATTLE OF POLTAVA, 27TH JUNE 1709—SUCCESS OF THE RUSSIANS IN THE REGIONS OF THE BALTIC

1709.

Thus Charles received but little aid from his ally Mazeppa; while a very powerful helper appeared to the Russians in form of an unusually cold winter, during which birds fell frozen to the ground. The Swedes felt the frost all the more that they were not furnished with warm clothing. During the spring of 1709, the troops of Charles were reduced to thirty thousand men, worn out by fighting and privation. The Swedish army was placed between the rivers Psel and Vorskla.



The chief camp was at Booditch, north of Poltava. In vain did Charles await aid from Turkey and Poland. Only the Zaporog Cossacks joined the Swedes: but on March 14 the Cossack fort was taken by the imperial forces. Even earlier, at the close of April, Charles had besieged Poltava, though unsuccessfully. The siege lasted a month. On June 4, Peter joined his army encamped on the left side of the Vorskla, and separated from Poltava by an impenetrable marsh. In order to save the town, which could no longer defend itself, Peter resolved to attack the enemy, and crossed the Vorskla. Before the battle, Peter thus addressed his army:

Battle of  
Poltava, June  
27, 1709.

‘Soldiers! the hour has come which must decide the fate of our native country! So you must not think that you fight for Peter alone, but for the state also. Peter is destined to enact his part for his dynasty, for the orthodox faith and church. You must not also be alarmed by the glory of our enemies—hitherto invincible: for it is false! You yourselves have more than once witnessed the victories we have gained over them. But during the battle, keep before your eyes truth and God, who fights for us. Trust to Him alone, as the Almighty, in the hour of contest: and as for Peter, be assured that he does not esteem his own life precious, if Russia only lives, together with your devotion, your glory, your prosperity.’

Whereupon Prince Golitzine in the name of the armies replied:

‘Sire! thou hast already seen our labour, our exploits, our zeal, our victories! We are still the same! We trust in God; and are ready to die for the church, for thee, for our native country!’

Thus was it written in God’s book of judgment that the fate of Russia should be decided on the plains of Ukraine, and on the banks of the, till then, little-known river Vorskla.

On June 27, before sunrise, the Russians saw the enemy advancing under command of Generals Sparre, Ross, and Slippenbach. At first the Swedes seemed to gain an advantage, but they pursued the retreating Russians, and were thus separated from the detachment of General Ross. Then the Swedes were met by the Russian artillery and pressed into a declivity, surrounded by a wood. General Ross, meanwhile, fought like a hero. The Swedes in the declivity might have easily helped him; but Peter ordered Menshikov to attack them. Menshikov did so, defeated the Swedes, and took General Slippenbach prisoner. Then General Ross, surrounded on all sides by Russians, was forced to yield himself as prisoner of war.

About 9 o’clock A.M. the action became general between the two armies. Peter, meanwhile, was exposed to the greatest danger. His hat and saddle were



both pierced by shot. Still he maintained presence of mind, and perfectly performed his duty as commander. The battle was prolonged till 12 o'clock, and terminated in the complete overthrow of the Swedes. Field-marshal Renschild, Chancellor Count Piper, Maximilian, prince of Wurtemberg, Generals Stakelberg and Hamilton surrendered as prisoners of war. Nine thousand Swedes of inferior rank were killed, 3000 were made prisoners. Charles, badly wounded in the leg, rode about in a conveyance between the ranks of the army. Suddenly a cannon-ball hit the conveyance, and the king fell to the ground. At first his soldiers thought he was killed, and were consequently in a state of agitation. Charles, however, revived, and ordered his soldiers to carry him on two crossed pikes.<sup>1</sup> But in vain did he endeavour to encourage his troops. They were entirely overthrown.

After offering up a prayer of thanksgiving on the battlefield, Peter, surrounded by his companions-in-arms, sat down to dine. At the same table he also seated his prisoners, the Swedish generals, as guests. Amid the thunder of cannons, Peter proposed a toast to the health of his teachers in the art of war. 'Who are these teachers?' inquired Field-marshal Renschild. 'You Swedish generals!' replied the sovereign. 'Please your majesty, you have acted too cruelly towards your teachers!' rejoined Renschild.

Charles scarcely escaped being made a prisoner. Along with Mazeppa and a small number of Swedes, the king crossed the Dnieper, and wended his way towards the Turkish frontiers. The Swedish forces, commanded by Loevenhaupt, were forced to surrender to Menshikov. Charles halted at Bender. There he placed himself under protection of the Turkish government, and strove to excite it against Russia. Mazeppa terminated his inglorious career by death two months after he reached Bender.

#### SUBSEQUENT EVENTS FROM 1710 TILL 1711

The victory of Poltava overthrew the power of Sweden—till then, supreme in northern Europe subsequent to the Thirty Years' War. Sweden's place was henceforth occupied by Russia. Previous to the battle of Poltava—'that famous victory, the Russian revival,' as it was named by contemporaries—the chief historical parts had been enacted by western European nations of Germanic and Roman race. But with the battle of Poltava, a new state appears in eastern Europe, in form of Russia. With it, also, the Slavonic race acquires new importance.

<sup>1</sup> A chair in which Charles was borne, wounded, from the battlefield of Poltava, is still carefully preserved in the Armoury Hall of the Moscow Kreml.

All those previously conquered by Charles soon raised their heads against him. The elector of Saxony and the king of Denmark hastened to violate the peace they had made with Sweden. Without the aid of Charles, Stanislaw Leschinski could not maintain himself on the Polish throne, and was forced to withdraw to Pomerania. Augustus was then again declared king of Poland. The chief scenes of action were once more removed to the Baltic Sea. Riga, Dinamund, Pernay, Revel, Viborg, Kegsholm, were taken by the Russians in 1710. Then Peter gave his niece Anna Ioannovna (subsequently reigning empress of Russia) in marriage to the duke of Courland. But in 1711 Peter 1711. was forced to quit the north, because Charles XII. and the French ambassador had succeeded in raising Turkey against Russia.

## CHAPTER V

WAR WITH TURKEY, 1711—CONTINUATION OF THE NORTHERN WAR, 1712-1713  
—DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN PETER AND HIS ALLIES—PETER'S JOURNEY TO  
FRANCE, 1717

AT the commencement of 1711, Peter began to prepare for war with Turkey, after learning that his ambassador there was shut up as a prisoner. Not only so: the Russian sovereign had conceived the bold design to penetrate to the heart of Turkish possessions by the aid of those professing the same religion, and, for the greater part, of the same race as himself. Moldavia, Wallachia, Servia, Montenegro promised him aid. Augustus of Poland also obliged himself to send 30,000 men. Thus the allies amounted to 90,000. The Russians numbered 40,000. Peter was, in fact, allured by promises; and, all too soon, was in the very same position as Charles XII. had recently been in Little Russia. Peter marched to Moldavia, through steppes, during the heat of summer, which entirely fatigued his troops. Cantemir, hospodar of Moldavia, had promised to furnish the Russians with supplies. But, finding himself as a weak object placed between two powerful foes, he had recourse to cunning. On the one hand, he feared the Turks, feigned fidelity to the sultan, and only openly declared partisanship with Russia when the van of the imperial force was actually entering Jassy. Notwithstanding, all the Moldavian nobles were very far from following the hospodar's example. Thus, although Cantemir was proverbially 'a very wise man, and one most able in council,' yet he helped Peter quite as little as formerly Mazeppa had helped Charles XII. The supplies were not prepared; and Brankovan, hospodar of Wallachia, in spite of his promises, had joined the Turks. The latter, meanwhile,



commanded by the grand vizier, had crossed the Danube. On July 9, Peter, on the banks of the river Pruth, with a force of 38,000 men, was surrounded by Turks numbering 200,000. Their attack had, however, been repulsed with great loss to them; but at the same time, the position of the Russians was well-nigh desperate. For they were without provisions, and cut off from water.

During the approaching night, the Turks, by Poniatovski's advice, had dug a trench around the Russian camp, and constructed a battery, so that they only awaited the arrival of the artillery in order to open a general firing on the whole Russian army. On that decisive night, Peter withdrew to his own tent, and there gave himself up to melancholy thoughts. All seemed to be lost. Two alternatives alone remained—to ask for peace, or to risk a battle. But neither promised success. All Peter's generals, too, were overcome by sadness and distrust.

Here follows an episode of national history which Russian painters love to represent.

Catherine, as usual, had accompanied her husband, and she was accordingly with him on this occasion. She alone was courageous. Not only so; she thought of concluding an advantageous peace with the Turks. She thereupon summoned a council of war, communicated her plan, and demanded that it should be made known to the sovereign. But no one dared to do so; for Peter had given strict orders that he should be left alone. Thus Catherine herself resolved to go to him. She accordingly went to his tent. Peter was at first displeased, but finally yielded to her suggestions. Immediately, Field-marshal Sheremetev was sent with a letter to the grand vizier, and with proposals of peace. Catherine, at the same time, added all the precious ornaments she had, and a considerable sum of money.

Meanwhile Peter had little hope of any treaty concerning peace. Accordingly, as he had alone the good of his native country in view, he wrote a letter to the senators, and frankly stated all the danger of his position. He expressed himself in the following terms: 'Without God's aid, nothing can save me. I must either die or give myself up as a prisoner! In the first instance, choose another sovereign worthy to reign over Russia; and in the second, do not execute any of my orders, if even they are written by my own hand!' (Kaledanov, p. 298.)

When the grand vizier had read the letter brought by Sheremetev, he (the vizier) showed it to Poniatovski and asked his opinion of it. 'I scarcely think,' replied Poniatovski, 'that the commander of 200,000 Turks will hold conference with an army of 20,000 men already in his power!' 'But what answer must I give the Russians?' said the vizier. 'The thunder of 400 Turkish cannons will be an answer!' exclaimed Poniatovski.



Peace, however, was concluded, certainly not an advantageous peace for Peter. He was obliged to restore Azoph to the Turks, as well as three forts which he had constructed. He was likewise forced to promise that he would no longer interfere with the affairs of Poland, and that he would allow Charles XII. free exit to his dominions. On informing the senate that peace had been concluded, Peter wrote: 'Although the transaction was not made without regret—for I was compelled to cede towns to acquire which I have taken so much trouble, and incurred so much loss—notwithstanding, I do think that the sacrifice will bring us advantage in another way, unquestionably more profitable!'

CONTINUATION OF THE NORTHERN WAR—DISAGREEMENT BETWEEN PETER AND  
HIS ALLIES—PETER'S JOURNEY TO FRANCE

The advantages to which Peter alluded were connected with the war at the 1712-1713. north-west, and acquisitions obtained on the shores of a European sea. During 1712 and 1713, the Russians, along with their allies, the Saxons and the Danes, continued to expel the Swedes from Pomerania. In 1713, at the beginning of May, the Russian fleet, amounting to two hundred vessels, sailed from St. Petersburg to the sea under command of Admiral Apraxine. Peter himself also commanded part of the fleet, and assumed the title of rear-admiral. Helsingfors and Abo (the chief towns of Finland) were taken. The library of Abo was then transported to St. Petersburg. The Swedes retreated to the interior of the country, but Admiral Apraxine and Prince Golitzine (Michael Michaelovitch) followed them step by step, and, after defeating them at Tammersfors, occupied nearly the whole of Finland. In 1714 (July 25) Peter defeated the Swedish fleet 1713-1714. at Angout, and occupied the island of Aland. The Swedes were there seized with a panic. All the forces that could possibly be collected hastened to defend Stockholm.

Peter, meanwhile, gradually more and more confirmed his power on the shores of the Baltic Sea, and threatened Sweden itself. During this interval, Charles XII. was uselessly losing time in Turkey, while endeavouring to excite the sultan against Russia. At length, in November 1714, after passing through Hungary and Germany, Charles appeared at Stralsund, besieged by allies whose numbers were now augmented by the Russians and Hanoverians. But even the hero's 1715-1716. presence did not save that town in 1715. During 1716, the Swedes lost Wismar, their last possession in Germany. But at the capitulation of Wismar, disagreement took place among the allies on account of Mecklenburg. At the beginning of 1716, Peter gave another of his nieces, Ekaterina Ioannovna, in marriage to 1716. Charles Leopold, duke of Mecklenburg. Peter then promised to use every effort

in order to secure the towns of Wismar and Warnemund for the duke, and to maintain his cause against all enemies, both exterior and interior. Among the latter, in particular, were the Mecklenburg nobles, with whom he was on very bad terms. In return, the duke allowed Russian merchants to live, to trade freely in all his dominions, and likewise to build Russo-Greek churches there. He also promised to give Russian troops passage through his territory, and to build storehouses for them at the imperial cost. The Mecklenburg nobles were thereupon exasperated. They dreaded alliance with Russia, and did all in their power against Peter. They besides endeavoured to expel Russian troops from Mecklenburg, and especially to make dispeace between the Russian sovereign and his allies by alarming the latter. Finally, insinuations were made concerning Peter's ambition, and of his intention to confirm his power in Germany. And the nobles could all the more easily succeed in their intrigues because a Mecklenburg nobleman named Bernstorff was minister in Hanover, and possessed the entire confidence of the Elector George, king of England. Two other Mecklenburgers were also in the service of Denmark, and had much influence on the king. Consequently the allies would not admit Russian forces into Wismar. The suspicion shown by the Danish king, while Peter was in Denmark with forces destined to be disembarked on the Swedish coast, still more irritated him against the allies, especially the elector of Hanover, king of England. Accordingly, towards the close of the year, Peter went to Holland. There Gortz, minister of Holstein, in the service of the Swedish king, was endeavouring to put various plans into execution. They were to reconcile Russia and Sweden by their united force; to dethrone George, king of England; finally, in his stead, to place the Pretender (James III., Stuart) upon the throne. But these plans were disclosed and did not succeed. Thus, on seeing that nothing was to be expected from allies, Peter resolved to undertake a journey to France, in order to form close alliance with the duke of Orleans, then regent during the minority of Louis xv. Peter also thought of marrying his daughter Elizaveta Petrovna to the young king; but the match was subsequently broken off. In Paris, state apartments in the palace of the Louvre were prepared for Peter; but he declined to occupy them, and took up his abode in an ordinary dwelling.

1717.

In a previous chapter we have already quoted the remarks of two German princesses regarding Peter, and the impression he produced upon them during his first journey abroad in 1697. At a later epoch, namely, in 1717, the French thus described his personal appearance :—‘Peter of Russia is tall, remarkably handsome, rather thin, and of a dark complexion. His eyes are large and bright. His glance is penetrating, and even sometimes fierce, especially when a convulsive movement



is seen in his face. His movements are sudden and irregular. No restraints of society hinder his actions. An air of majestic audacity distinguishes a sovereign who feels himself everywhere master. While walking along the streets, he goes into the workshops of tradesmen, stops before each object, and always displays extensive information. Articles merely elegant, or exclusively for pleasure, interest him little. But all that is useful, all concerning navigation, trade, or necessary arts, excites his curiosity. And even then, he causes astonishment at the correctness of his ideas, and shows as much capacity for learning, as eagerness for knowledge.'

In a capital essentially brilliant and famed for luxury, Peter was distinguished by the extreme simplicity of his dress. He wore a coat made of coarse, cheap cloth, a broad girdle from which hung a sword, a short round wig, without powder, a shirt without frills. (Soloviev, pp. 262-3.) Ilovaiski (p. 254) states that when Peter was in Paris during 1717, on seeing Richelieu's statue he exclaimed: 'Great man! I would have given thee one-half of my empire, on condition that thou hadst taught me how to govern the other!'

## CHAPTER VI

DEATH OF BORIS PETROVITCH SHEREMETEV, 17TH FEBRUARY 1717—DEATH OF ALEXEI PETROVITCH, JUNE 26, 1718—CONCLUSION OF THE NORTHERN WAR—PETER ADOPTS THE TITLE OF EMPEROR, 1721—FOUNDATION OF THE RUSSIAN FLEET CELEBRATED, AUGUST 1723—WAR WITH PERSIA—CANAL OF LADOGA—FOUNDATION OF THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES, 1724—CORONATION OF CATHERINE, MAY 7, 1724—RELICS OF ST. ALEXANDER NEVSKI TRANSPORTED TO ST. PETERSBURG, AUGUST 30, 1724—DEATH OF PETER THE GREAT, 28TH JANUARY 1725

AT this epoch, Peter met with a great loss by the death of his brave companion-1716. in-arms, Boris Petrovitch Sheremetev, 17th January 1716. Soon after, another still greater loss awaited the sovereign. We allude to the death of his son Peter, heir-presumptive to the throne. The young prince died in his fifth year. His birth had occasioned joy to his father; and now the latter was overwhelmed by the decease of Catherine's only remaining son. It is said that Peter shut himself up alone, and for three days remained without food. But the exhortations of Catherine and of Prince Dolgorookov finally succeeded in dissipating the sovereign's gloomy thoughts.

1718—Death  
of Alexei  
Petrovitch.

As this epoch, Alexei Petrovitch also died. We shall, however, subsequently



revert to the subject. We must now proceed to notice the conclusion of the Northern War.

1717-18.

Peter had not fully attained his aim by a journey to France; for France at that period had formed close alliance with England. On returning to Holland, the ministers who accompanied Peter had a secret interview with Görtz, who promised to conclude peace between Russia and Sweden. Consequently, during the spring of 1717, conferences were held at Lefoe, one of the islands of Aland, between Peter's plenipotentiaries, Bruce and Osterman, and those of Charles XII., Görtz and Gillenborg. It was then stipulated that Russia should be confirmed in the possession of Livonia, Esthonia, Ingria, and part of Carelia, in return for which Russia was to aid Sweden not only to regain its former possessions in Germany, but also to obtain Norway. Augustus was to renounce the Polish throne, which should then be restored to Stanislaw Leschinski. However, the violent death of Charles XII., in 1718 (December), at the siege of Frederikshall, where he was shot, destroyed all these plans.

On learning the tragic fate of the Swedish hero, Peter exclaimed: 'Ah, brother Charles! How I regret thee!' and shed tears.

The death of Charles XII. occasioned great changes in the cabinet of Stockholm. The king's younger sister, Ulrika Eleanora, ascended the throne. She was the consort of Frederick of Hesse-Cassel, and was proclaimed queen, although a nearer heir existed in the person of her nephew, Charles Frederick of Holstein, son of her elder sister, Hedwige Sophia.

Soon different parties were formed in Sweden; and the most powerful of them was unfavourable to Russia.

1719 1720.

It is accordingly not surprising that Görtz was executed as a traitor. The conferences of Aland were terminated; and the Swedes, although with great sacrifices, concluded peace with all their enemies, except Russia. England took the part of Sweden, and sent it a fleet of twenty-eight vessels and several frigates. But all that did not overawe Peter. He merely remarked: 'I twice proposed peace to my brother Charles, once from necessity, and again from magnanimity. Now I shall extort terms from Sweden by force!'

1720.

Peter was meanwhile persuaded that the duke of Holstein, then living in Vienna, was heir-presumptive to the Swedish throne. Accordingly, the young prince was invited to St. Petersburg, and acknowledged as bridegroom of Anna Petrovna, Peter's eldest daughter. He, moreover, refused to conclude peace with Sweden till it restored the duke his possessions in Holstein, and until he was declared heir to the Swedish throne. This powerful protection shown to the young prince terrified the Swedes. Peter, besides, wished to prove that he was

not overawed by the English fleet. He therefore sent vessels and troops, commanded by Apraxine, to Sweden. They devastated the shores of that country till within seven miles of Stockholm. The Swedes were in terror. The queen Ulrika Eleanora ceded her rights to her husband, Frederick of Hesse-Cassel, and 1721. he was declared king of Sweden.

At length peace was concluded between that country and Russia at Neustadt, <sup>1721, August 30—Peace of Neustadt.</sup> The Russian plenipotentiaries were again Bruce and Osterman. Sweden ceded to Russia Livonia, Esthonia, Ingria, part of Carelia, and part of Finland. Thus the constant aim of the Moscovite sovereigns, since John the Terrible, was at length attained. In other words, Russia had obtained the shores of the Baltic Sea.

In Petersburg, that important event was celebrated by a masquerade prolonged for a whole week. On October 22nd, Peter heard service in the Cathedral of the Trinity. After service, the convention of peace was read aloud. Then Theophan, archbishop of Pskov, preached a sermon, in which he enumerated all the glorious exploits of the sovereign on account of which he was justly entitled, 'Father of his native country, Emperor, and the Great.' Whereupon the Chancellor Golovine pronounced a speech in the following terms: 'By the labour and guidance of your imperial majesty, we have issued from the darkness of ignorance to the theatre of glory in this world, and, so to speak, we have been brought forth to actual life from a state of non-existence. Thus have we been joined to the society of political nations.' The speech terminated by exclamations of 'Vivat! Vivat! Vivat, Peter the Great! Father of his native country! Emperor of all Russia!'

These words, repeated by a crowd in church, and without, were proclaimed amid the sounds of trumpets, kettledrums, and drums, together with the firing of guns and cannons. The new emperor replied to the senators, 'that, with all his heart, he thanked God; but, while hoping for peace, he would not grow weak in preparation for war, so as to avoid the fate of the Greek monarchs. It is necessary to aim at the good of all; thus the condition of the people is lightened.' (Soloviev, p. 264.)

#### WAR WITH PERSIA, 1722

When Peter had thus concluded war in Europe, he next thought of his 1722. position in Asia. For a lengthened period, European traders had endeavoured to obtain free passage along the Volga to the Caspian Sea and the shores of Persia, and had proved to the Moscovite government that Russia, from its geographical position, should be the medium of commerce between Europe and Asia. Even



during the reign of Alexi Michaelovitch, by means of an Armenian company, an attempt had been made in Moscow to concentrate the commerce of Persian silk in Russia. In 1716, Peter had endeavoured to find out a way by water from the Caspian Sea to India, to form artificial junction between the Baltic and the Caspian Seas; and having confirmed his power in the former, by the peace of Neustadt, he now endeavoured to gain a firm footing on the shores of the latter. During the spring of 1722, Peter sailed along the rivers Moskva, Oka, and Volga to Astrachan, and in July issued a manifesto that he would declare war on Persia if the powerless shah did not offer any return for the offence experienced by Russian merchants at Shemach. In July, the emperor quitted Astrachan, along with his troops and fleet. In August, Tarki was taken. After the defeat of Machmood, sultan of Ootemish, Derbent was occupied. But further success was arrested for want of food, as the vessel which was bringing corn was detained by a storm. In a council of war, it was accordingly decreed to terminate the campaign for that year, to leave a garrison in Derbent, and to return to Astrachan. In November, Colonel Shipov was sent to occupy the districts of Giliani, and Peter returned to Moscow. The war, meanwhile, was successfully continued even in the emperor's absence. Shipov defeated the Persians at Resht. During the summer of 1722, General Matiooshkine took Bak. In autumn, the ambassador of the shah Tochmas concluded a treaty in St. Petersburg, by which Peter incurred the obligation to send the shah troops against all rebels, and to confirm his possession of the Persian throne, in return for which the shah ceded to Russia the towns of Derbent and Bak, with their districts Gilian, Mazanderan, and Astrabat.

#### FOUNDATION OF THE RUSSIAN FLEET CELEBRATED, 11TH AUGUST 1723

1723.

Peter constantly kept in view the interests of the duke of Holstein, and therefore sent Bassevitch to Stockholm, as a minister entirely devoted to the young prince. Moreover, the formidable Russian fleet, under pretext of a manœuvre, appeared again in the Baltic Sea. The fleet consisted of a hundred galleys, twenty vessels, and fourteen frigates. They were visible from Stockholm. The Swedes and Danes were terrified. Had they calculated twenty years ago that so formidable an adversary would soon appear? Influenced by fear, the Swedes consented to grant the Duke of Holstein an annual income of 25,000 thalers, and, besides, to keep him in view as an heir to the Swedish throne. On returning as real commander in the Baltic Sea, Peter, in Revel, laid the foundation of the famous haven of Røgersvik, and afterwards proceeded to Petersburg. This expedition on sea was his last.

The emperor now saw that his work on the banks of the Neva had been



successful; and, as if he had a presentiment that but a short time would yet be granted to him, he resolved to celebrate the foundation of the Russian fleet.

According to his orders, the little boat in which he had once sailed on the river Yaoza was brought from Moscow to Cronstadt and there launched, amid the firing of cannons.

Foundation of  
the Russian  
Fleet cele-  
brated, August  
11, 1723.

The festival was celebrated with magnificence. All foreign ministers then in St. Petersburg were invited to be present. The little boat, 'the small grandfather of the Russian fleet, sailed under the imperial flag, between rows of large and numerous grandsons.'<sup>1</sup> The rudder was held by Peter himself, and the rowers were vice-admirals. Each vessel which the little boat approached saluted it with all the artillery, while the little boat also answered by three shots. The thunder of cannons was thus heard all along the Gulf of Finland. The brilliancy of the festival was heightened by the presence of Catherine and a magnificent court. The scene closed by general rejoicing, prolonged till night was far advanced.

#### THE CANAL OF LADOGA

St. Petersburg, constantly augmenting in extent and population, meanwhile more and more, felt the necessity of uninterrupted communication with the southern and interior districts of Russia. Indeed, thus alone could the new capital obtain articles needful for life. The navigable tributaries of the Volga, such as the Msta, the Volhov, the Neva, presented these means. It remained only to join the rivers Msta and the Tvertza at Vuishaia Volotschka, and Peter did so. Besides, the Lake of Ladoga, exposed to all winds, was a great hindrance to vessels which sailed upon it. In consequence of the storms which frequently occurred there, not a few vessels, with their crews, had already perished, while St. Petersburg, too, was thus exposed to want of provisions. These obstacles, however, Peter overcame. His great idea was that strength had been given him to lift a heavy burden. This is, in fact, inscribed on a medal struck when he conquered Esthonia and Livonia: *Sunt mihi, quæ valeant in talia pondera vires.*

Peter accordingly resolved to make a canal along the banks of Lake Ladoga, from the source of the Neva to the mouth of the Volhov; and, although the canal was to be extended over one hundred and five versts and in the direction of many marshy spots, these obstacles, notwithstanding, did not discourage Peter. At first, the canal was commenced under the superintendence of General Peesarev, but afterwards was continued by General Munnich, a native of Oldenburg, who had

<sup>1</sup> It is known that Peter named the little boat which gave him the idea of forming a Russian fleet, 'a little grandfather, who had large and numerous grandchildren!'

We have seen the little boat, which is still carefully preserved.

entered the Russian service. Munnich is an individual remarkable for the important services he rendered to Russia, and also for the vicissitudes of his own fate. In order to construct the canal, Peter spared no expense; and 25,000 men were constantly employed at the work.

#### FOUNDATION OF THE ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

Amid similar occupation, Peter, in accordance with the views of Leibnitz, founded in St. Petersburg an Academy of Sciences. Its president was the emperor's own medical man, Blumentrost, and its members included many learned foreigners, invited to Russia. The duties of the academy were to diffuse useful knowledge in the empire, to compose works for education, to give instruction by means of public lectures, etc. But the great founder of this temple of science did not survive till it was opened. That took place after his decease.

During Peter's expedition to Persia, he celebrated his fiftieth year. He was now fifty-two. His naturally strong constitution seemed to promise long life; but extraordinary labour, a constant strain on his energy, combined with excess of various kinds, and inattention to his health, told upon him and undermined his strength. Besides, he was continually oppressed by the gloomy thought that, after his death, all the fruits of his labour might perhaps disappear. He thus felt himself approaching the tomb. On feeling his strength decline, he hastened to intimate his intentions and will regarding a successor to the throne. Although, on February 5, 1722, a statute had been issued concerning inheritance to the throne of Russia, by which a Russian monarch had a right to appoint a successor, notwithstanding none knew on whom Peter's choice would fall. Many nobles flattered themselves with the hope that perhaps they might be chosen, but, contrary to their expectation, this was not so. The rare qualities of Catherine had long ago arrested the attention of Peter. As his faithful companion, she had participated in various difficult expeditions of his eventful life. Thus it seemed to him that, after his decease, she might continue his great work. Accordingly, in order to prepare Russia to see her on the throne, Peter resolved that she should be solemnly crowned and declared empress. Catherine's coronation therefore took place, with great magnificence, in Moscow, May 7, 1724. Peter himself placed the crown of

Russia on Catherine's head. Overcome with emotion, the newly-made empress, in tears, threw herself at the feet of her husband and benefactor, and wished to embrace his knees; but Peter did not allow her to do so. 'Thou art worthy to wear a crown, although not born of imperial race!' exclaimed he. Next day, Catherine, seated on the throne, received the congratulations of the clergy, the highest dignitaries, and others. Among those who congratulated her was Peter

1724.

1724, 7th May  
—Coronation  
of Catherine  
in Moscow.



himself, as Admiral Peter Michaelov. Then, in honour of Catherine, Peter instituted the company of the Cavalier Guard, to whose members were appointed the ranks of ensign-bearer and lieutenant of the army, while the emperor himself assumed the rank of captain.

RELICS OF ST. ALEXANDER NEVSKI TRANSPORTED TO ST. PETERSBURG,  
30TH AUGUST 1724

After quitting Moscow and reaching St. Petersburg, Peter resolved to transport the relics of St. Alexander Nevski from Vladimir to the spot rendered famous by the victories of that ancient hero—*i.e.* the banks of the Neva. And this was accomplished. The sacred relics were met in triumph. Peter placed them in the Alexander Nevski monastery, which he had founded, and where they still repose, honoured and venerated.

Relics of St. Alexander Nevski transported to St. Petersburg, 30th August 1724.

In spite of Peter's declining health, in October he went to Schlüsselburg, in order to celebrate the taking of that fort. Thence he went to Olonetz, to inspect the foundries there. In one of them he himself forged a mass of iron, weighing three poods (one Russian pood is equal to forty English pounds). Then, after examining salt-boiling at Staraia Roosa, he went to see the work at the canal of Ladoga. He next purposed to go to Sesterbek to investigate a foundry there, where armour was made. Thus he did not halt at St. Petersburg, but proceeded to the village of Lachta, at seven versts from the capital, and on the Gulf of Finland. It was a stormy autumn evening. Peter then remarked that a boat full of sailors and soldiers, sailing from Cronstadt, was about to be cast on a sandbank by winds and waves, and was thus exposed to the greatest peril. Peter immediately sent sailors from his own yacht to help the boat; but they could do little. Some of them were even carried away by the current. Whereupon he reached the sandbank, threw himself into the sea, with water up to the breast, attained the boat, and saved several of its crew from certain death. But foreseeing the disastrous effect that the exploit might have on his health, he gave up the intention to go to Sesterbek, and returned to St. Petersburg. Catherine was alarmed on hearing what had occurred at Lachta; but Peter endeavoured to quiet her fears. 'I am well now,' exclaimed he. 'Munnich's work at the canal of Ladoga has cured me! We shall soon have a great pleasure. We shall embark in a light boat on the Neva, and then disembark at Moscow, in Golovine's garden.' But alas! Peter knew not that he would never see Moscow again! In saving others at Lachta, he had injured his own health. His heroic act had caused a severe cold, which increased his previous illness. But, although oppressed by suffering, Peter did not forget the interests of the duke of Holstein, and held conferences with Sweden and the

Events at Lachta, 5th November 1724.



emperor of Germany concerning the restoration of the young prince's domains. On the name's-day of Catherine, Peter solemnly betrothed his daughter Anna Petrovna to the duke. The ensuing festivities seemed to lessen the emperor's sufferings.

However, he was doomed to grief at this period. It soon appeared that, even among the highest functionaries, traitors were to be found. Investigations then ensued. Mons, the first gentleman of the chamber, and his sister Balk, lady-in-waiting to the empress, and her favourite, were both accused of extortion and abuse of power. Others also were found guilty. In spite of Catherine's tears and entreaties, Peter was inflexible. The offenders were accordingly punished, and one was executed. These victims of Peter's severity were the last. The event had, meanwhile, a pernicious influence on his already shattered health. All saw that the fatal hour was nigh. But Peter alone remained calm. In order to disperse the sad thoughts of those around, he resolved to celebrate the coming New Year of 1725. His illness then seemed less severe; but it increased as the month advanced, and was finally incurable. He then partook of the Holy Communion. His sufferings were, during this interval, intense. 'Learn from me what a weak mortal man is,' said he to those near him. For three days and nights Catherine faithfully watched beside the death-bed of her consort. An unusually hard struggle between life and death ensued. But, at last, death gained the ascendancy; and on January 28, 1725, at five o'clock in the afternoon, Peter passed away, in his fifty-third year. His remains continued uninterred till March 8. At his funeral in St. Petersburg, in the Cathedral of Peter and Paul, Theophan Prokopovitch, archbishop of Pskov, pronounced a touching, eloquent panegyric on the deceased. Although it was short, a whole hour was, notwithstanding, necessary for its deliverance, as the archbishop himself was bathed in tears, and his words were interrupted by sighs and sobbing of his hearers.

1725.

1725,  
January 28—  
Death of Peter  
the Great.

## CHAPTER VII

### SUCCESSION TO THE THRONE—PETER THE GREAT AND HIS FAMILY

PETER left behind him many distinguished individuals, whose names will frequently appear in the subsequent history of Russia; but to whom would he leave his new empire? As we have already seen, his early education had rendered him little suited to domestic life; and his first consort, Evdokia Feodorovna Lopouchine, obtained no influence over him. On the contrary, they were so totally different that no harmony could exist between them. Evdokia was, in fact, firmly

attached to the antiquated ideas then prevalent in Russia, and with an evil eye viewed Peter's reforms. Thus a divorce ensued, and she was obliged to take the veil. Peter and Evdokia, however, had a son Alexei, born in 1690. Till the age of nine years the boy had been left beside his mother, displeased with a husband seldom at home, and, when he was there, no cheerful guest. It is thus not extraordinary that Alexei had no affection for his father. Then Evdokia was removed to a monastery. Peter, as before, was constantly absent. He was only like a stranger in his own house. True, he did pay a certain degree of attention to the education of his son. The young prince, meanwhile, showed capacity for learning, and had a taste for reading. However, only one kind of books seemed to interest him; or, in other words, all concerning the church. His favourite conversation, too, was with the clergy, and regarding sacred literature. As frequently happens, the son was totally unlike his father, but very much resembled his grandfather and great-grandfather. Alexei Petrovitch was, besides, physically quite unfitted for the life of constant movement and activity so remarkable in Peter. Peter, meanwhile, considered that his great work could alone be continued and completed by the untiring energy of his successor. But these demands, at total variance with Alexei's natural disposition, only irritated him, and rendered him still more averse to the innovations of Peter. The latter was thus urged to exact a radical change of his son's inclinations. Besides, not a few individuals, displeased with the changes Peter had introduced, gladly espoused the cause of his son. There were also many for whose interest it was to augment the enmity already existing between the young prince and his father. Alexander Danilovitch Menshikov was especially one of that class, as we learn from Ilovaiski's statements (p. 271). Alexei was accordingly surrounded by the upholders of the old party, in whose society and conversation he found the same pleasure that had formerly been experienced by Peter in intercourse with Lefort and others like him.

Such was the state of affairs, and such was Alexei's open preference for ancient Russian customs, when in 1711 he was obliged, by Peter's command, to marry the Princess Sophia Charlotte Cecilia of Brunswick Wolfenbüttel Blankenburg, who still continued, even after her marriage, to profess the Lutheran faith. The union was a very unhappy one. On that account Peter blamed his son alone. Sophia died in 1715. She left two children, a son, afterwards Peter II., and a daughter Natalia.

We subjoin the following quotation from Andréev's fascinating work, entitled *Representatives of Power in Russia after Peter I.* (p. 28):—

‘There is a legend which affirms that Alexei's consort, the Princess Sophia



Charlotte, did not in reality die, but only pretended to be dead, and had a mock funeral. Then she is said to have disappeared and assumed the name of Countess Konigsmark. Finally she was seen in Louisiana and in the Isle of France, where she married a common serjeant, and henceforth lived as a private individual. But all these statements belong to the region of fancy, even of an author who deemed it necessary to quote some romantic details found among the documents of Duclos.'

Peter, seeing that every means failed to transform his son, thus wrote to him:—

'The grief that I feel concerning the future lessens the gladness I experience at my present success, for I clearly see that thou despisest all the means which would render thee capable to reign after me. Thine incapacity I call self-will, for thou canst not plead want of mind or of physical strength. By means of military exploits, we have issued from previous darkness. We have caused ourselves to be known to other nations, while we have forced them to esteem us. Yet thou dost not wish to hear of military affairs. I demand of thee not labour, but good-will. I myself am but a man, exposed to death. To whom shall I leave my empire? If thou dost not change, know that I shall deprive thee of inheritance. Know also that if I have not spared my own life, and do not still spare it, for my country and my subjects, is it possible that I shall spare thee? It is better to have good strangers than one's own who are worthless.'

To this, Alexei replied that he was unfitted to reign, and had no views of the throne. To which Peter returned that he had no confidence in the assurances of his son, and that he should either alter his manner of life or become a monk. It is said that Alexei's partisan, Kikine, then exclaimed, while addressing the young prince: 'Go into a cloister! There the monkish cowl will not be nailed to your head.'

Alexei thereupon testified his wish to retire from the world and to become a recluse. Peter, however, delayed the decision of so important an affair. On going abroad, at the commencement of 1716, he gave his son six months for deliberation. But on receiving no answer when that time had expired, the emperor once more wrote, in order to demand a decided reply. If Alexei agreed to all that was required, he was, moreover, ordered to join his father abroad. The young prince replied that he would go, and, sure enough, he did leave St. Petersburg; but, instead of joining his father, went to Vienna, to the German emperor, Charles VI., under whose protection Alexei placed himself, while affirming that he endeavoured to escape from persecution and death. Alexis had left Russia along with Euphrosine, his favourite, a common girl of Finnish origin.



In order to avoid his father's pursuit, Alexis quitted Vienna and went to Tyrol, to the castle of Erenberg, and then to Naples, to the castle of St. Elmo. But all his precautions were vain. Peter sent Tolstoi and Roomiantzov to find out the hiding-place of Alexei, and to demand that he should be delivered up by the Emperor Charles VI. In case of a refusal Peter threatened war. Then Charles allowed Tolstoi to go to Naples, and to persuade Alexei in a personal interview to return. Tolstoi, too, did more. He artfully gained Euphrosine to his side, and by her aid endeavoured to urge the prince to comply with his father's demands. Entire pardon of the past was, besides, promised. At first, Alexis would in no wise consent, but finally he agreed to return to Russia along with Tolstoi. On the one hand, the prince was alarmed at the thought that Peter himself would appear in Italy; on the other, Alexis believed in promised pardon. It, in fact, had deprived the Emperor Charles of all pretext to detain the young prince. At the beginning of 1718 Alexei was accordingly brought first to Moscow, and thence to St. Petersburg. He was then shut up in prison, and surrounded by a strict guard. Peter next demanded that his son should renounce all claims to the throne, and even pardoned him, on condition that he disclosed every particular concerning his flight, and named all who had advised or aided him to leave Russia. Investigations then began, accompanied by the most hideous tortures, in order to discover if Alexis and his party desired to restore the ancient order of things. Under the influence of torment many discoveries were made. It soon appeared that Alexei cherished the utmost antipathy to his father's reforms, as well as towards those surrounding Peter, and even to the latter himself. Chopin, in his *Histoire de Russie*, mentions that Alexei owned how on one occasion, during confession, he had acknowledged a desire for Peter's death. 'You are not the only one who does so. We (priests) desire it also,' was the father-confessor's reply. Finally, many were convicted of having encouraged the young prince's enmity to Peter, and of urging the former to become a temporary monk, in order subsequently to quit the cloister. Kikine and others had given that advice. It furthermore came to light that Alexei's mother, Evdokia (or Elena), the involuntary nun, could in no wise become accustomed to her monastic retreat, but still continued to call herself empress, and eagerly awaited the time when she would once more appear in the world surrounded by the honours of her previous position there. Not only so: Dosetheus, archbishop of Rostov, had been encouraging her to cherish that hope by his false predictions and would-be visions. It was likewise disclosed that Evdokia had held intercourse with Peter's sister, the Princess Maria Alexéevna, and also with General Gliébov. After torture, many clerical and lay individuals, who had

participated in the unhappy affair of Alexei Petrovitch, were executed. Among them were Dosetheus, Kikine, Gliebov, and others. Evdokia was shut up at New Ladoga and the Princess Maria Alexéevna in Schlüsselburg. Whereupon Peter formed a council of one hundred and twenty-four persons, including the highest dignitaries. They decreed that Alexei should be condemned to die. The sentence, however, was not put into execution, as the unhappy young prince meanwhile expired in prison, June 26, 1718.

Death of  
Alexei Petro-  
vitch, June 26,  
1718.

Such are the statements made by Russian historians—the most authentic, such as Soloviev, Ilovaiski, etc. Andréev, however, in his work above quoted, makes the following remarks (p. 28):—

‘After some time, by Peter’s orders, Alexei Petrovitch was privately put to death in prison by the hand of General Veidé. The dissolute life and cruelty of the young prince were blamed as the causes of his consort’s premature decease.’

The death of Alexei Petrovitch is, however, one of those mysterious historical events concerning which the whole truth will never be known. Andréev is the first Russian author who has dared to write so frankly on the subject. Indeed, we are not a little amazed that his work, containing such remarks, is permitted to appear in print.

The unhappy affair of Alexei is a dark stain on Peter’s otherwise glorious reign. The tragic event clearly proves that the cruelty inherited by the Russians from an early period still existed and was in full force at the commencement of the eighteenth century.

In 1711 (1712 according to Soloviev) Peter had solemnly acknowledged the Livonian prisoner, Martha Skovronskaia, as his wife. She was then known by the names of Ekaterina Alexéevna. Unlike Evdokia Lopouchine, who was fanatically attached to ancient Russian customs, Catherine was, on the contrary, one who better understood Peter’s aims and mode of life. She constantly accompanied him in his campaigns, and possessed a truly wonderful influence over him. This was especially the case when he was afflicted by periodical convulsions, occasioned, it is said, in consequence of poison administered to him by Sophia during his childhood.

Peter and Catherine had a large family. Soloviev (p. 282) mentions two of their sons, Paul and Peter, both of whom died in early childhood.

The daughters of Peter the Great were—Anna Petrovna, duchess of Holstein (mother of Peter III.); Elizaveta Petrovna, afterwards reigning empress of Russia from 1741 till 1761; a third daughter, Natalia, died soon after her father. Mention is also made of a daughter, Margarita Petrovna, who died in infancy.

In February 1721 Peter issued an ukase, by which a sovereign of Russia had



a right to choose a successor, or to disinherit the latter, if unworthy to fill the throne.

The celebrated preacher, Theophan Prokopovitch, archbishop of Pskov, then wrote a composition, entitled *Truth, the Will of Monarchs*, in which he endeavoured to prove the wisdom of these decrees.

But Peter did not himself profit by the new law he had made, for he died before he had named a successor.

It is said that, on feeling his last hour at hand, he sent for his daughter Anna, and exclaimed, 'Give all to——' Then he fell back and expired, ere he had time to add more.

## CHAPTER VIII

### PETER'S REFORM OF ADMINISTRATION AND OF DIFFERENT CLASSES

AMONGST other changes introduced in Russia by Peter the Great, one of primary importance concerned the transformation of different classes of society. The prohibition of strife for precedence had already weakened the hereditary Moscovite aristocracy, and Peter dealt a final blow at the distinction of the boyards by opening the way to the highest posts alike to individuals of totally insignificant origin as well as to foreign emigrants. In this wise the manner of service and the sovereign's favour were considered in reality higher than distinguished birth. In his *Table of Rank* (1722) Peter divided all conditions in service, like those of the Germans, into fourteen classes. Each class corresponded to a certain grade, military or civil. At that epoch, several orders were likewise instituted, such as those of St. André, 'the first-called,' and also of St. Catherine. Certain tokens of distinction were likewise conferred on individuals who had served faithfully or for a lengthened period. Such measures determined the particular rank of those in office, in the same form as it still exists in Russia. The classes of functionaries, having different grades, were chiefly filled by persons from among landed proprietors or those who had formerly been in service. They then received the general appellation of 'nobles.' Persons of any other class who had attained the first rank of an officer in the army, or the eighth class of civil service, thus obtained a right to be entitled 'hereditary nobles.' Peter rendered hereditary landed property equal to that merely conferred for service, but he also confirmed the duty of each nobleman to serve during his whole life. Those who avoided service forfeited their property. The vovodes, or commanders of provinces, were ordered to assemble noblemen's sons, from ten to thirteen years,



in order to inscribe them for military service. Those unfit for it were to be civilians. In 1714 Peter also endeavoured to introduce the law of primogeniture, by which the eldest son, or one son appointed by the father, should inherit the whole property. It thus remained entire, and could not be sold to strangers.

The inhabitants of suburbs were divided by Peter into three sections. The two first were called 'guilds.' They were composed of merchants and of different artisans. The third was formed of the poorest inhabitants of towns. In the population of villages two sections were, besides, formed—the so-called 'polooniki,' or peasants who still retained the right to remove from one spot to another, and who also tilled the ground in return for a certain part of the crops; the second section consisted of the 'odno-doortzi,' or those in service who had become poor. They, on equal footing with the peasants, were obliged to pay poll-tax, but, notwithstanding, retained the right to possess serfs.

The change of the previous duties levied on land into the poll-tax occasioned the first revision of the class which paid that assessment. In 1719 they amounted to six millions. In that revision, or census, peasants belonging to landed proprietors were classed together with bondmen-serfs. Both were, however, obliged to pay poll-tax and to become recruits. Indeed, for exact compliance with these regulations landed proprietors were held responsible. The last measure finally confirmed peasants as the property of landed proprietors.

In 1721, however, Peter forbade peasants to be sold otherwise than as a whole family together.

The administrative measures of Peter tended to introduce more simple, uniform management. Thus, instead of the previous division of the country into districts, which had become complicated and confused during several centuries, Peter divided Russia into twelve governments, which, in turn, were subdivided into provinces. At the head of the first were placed governors or general-governors; at the second were voevodes. Those under them in authority were called by the foreign names of landrichters, commanders, landraths, commissaries, etc. The administration of districts was concentrated in the chancery or seal-office of governors and of voevodes. In 1711, instead of the former council of boyards, was instituted the senate, as the highest place in government for administrative, judicial, and financial affairs. At first, the senate was formed only during the periods of the sovereign's frequent absence from the capital, and consisted of nine senators. But subsequently (1718) the senate became permanent, and the number of its members went on gradually increasing. In the senate affairs were not otherwise decided than by the unanimous decree of all the members, and confirmation of that decree was ratified by the procurator-general. At a

later epoch, the public offices of Moscow were transformed by Peter into so-called 'colleges,' organised according to the Danish and Swedish manner, and submitted to the senate. In these courts or colleges affairs were decided by majority of votes. Of course, when these colleges were opened it became necessary to find individuals who could properly transact business. Peter therefore invited foreign jurists to Russia. But as they were unacquainted with the Russian language, they required interpreters. Peter, besides, tried to obtain scribes in Austria from among Bohemians and Moravians, as the latter could sooner learn Russ. In order to prepare functionaries to transact business in these college-courts, in 1716 forty young Russian scribes were sent to learn at Königsberg. Besides, Swedish prisoners who had acquired Russ had proposals to enter service in these colleges. The introduction of aulic judges in the most considerable towns shows an attempt to separate the judicial part from the jurisdiction of district administrators. Peter likewise endeavoured to render traders and manufacturers free from the jurisdiction of voevodes by instituting burgomasters, chosen by citizens from their own sphere. All classes of traders thus submitted to the tribunal of burgomasters in Moscow (1699). In chief towns magistrates were also instituted from among chosen individuals. However, the collegiate system did not produce the desired results; for the presidents of colleges and courts of justice made use of their privileges and other formalities by submitting to colleagues, and decided an affair according to their opinion. In the administration of justice, verbal accusations were permanently changed for those in writing. In towns and districts Peter instituted the beginning of a police, whose duties were to maintain the order and safety of society. Notwithstanding, special establishments of police were not yet founded. Their duties were imposed on governors, voevodes, etc. Only for capital cities a general-police-master (General Devier) was nominated. (Ilovaiski, pp. 255-258.)

## CHAPTER IX

### DOMESTIC ECONOMY—ARMIES—INSTITUTIONS—FAMILY LIFE

EVEN amid the most important state affairs, Peter's attention was likewise turned to minute details of domestic economy. Thus permission was granted to find out mines and to work them, while paying a certain percentage to proprietors on whose lands mines were discovered. Orders were also given to cut corn with scythes instead of sickles. Many Russian youths were also sent abroad in order to learn different trades, etc. Manufacturing industry, which till this period had



hardly existed in Russia, was created by the untiring energy of Peter the Great. During his reign more than two hundred manufactories and mills were built. In order to facilitate commercial intercourse in the interior of the country, he paid the utmost attention to the means of communication between one spot and another. Several good roads were accordingly made, and we have already noticed the construction of the canal of Ladoga, so essential to St. Petersburg.

Indeed, the foundation of that capital, in a marshy, desert spot, far removed from the centre of the country, cost immense efforts and sacrifices, as we previously remarked. Many of the poor workmen, summoned from distant parts of the empire to build the new city, perished while doing so from heavy labour and from disease. Peter sometimes commanded stone-building to be everywhere stopped, and ordered every mason to be sent to the banks of the Neva. Sometimes the town was inundated by water. Accordingly, it thus became necessary to raise the ground by means of carried earth.

Other objects of Peter's special care were the army and the fleet. In order to form regular troops, a better system for recruits was introduced. All classes which paid imposts were obliged to furnish one recruit from a certain number of individuals. Only traders could purchase exemption from being recruits. The nobles furnished officers for the army. Young noblemen generally began their service in the ranks of the guards, where the best soldiers were chosen from among the regiments of the army. All the interior organisation of land forces was copied from the Germans, and the military were dressed in German uniform. The equipment of the fleet was principally taken from Dutch models. The Russian fleet consisted of forty-eight vessels of the line and eight hundred small ships. The greater part of the regular forces (which amounted to 200,000) found a position in different governments (provinces) in houses of the town and village inhabitants.

Concerning popular instruction, Peter's attention was especially turned towards the clergy and the nobles. For the former, institutions were founded in every diocese. At that epoch the influence of Little Russian schools was peculiarly felt—particularly that of the Kiev Academy—in the enlightenment of the Russian clergy. For nobles and functionaries elementary schools were opened in provinces, where pupils of the Moscow Mathematical School were sent as teachers. In fact, noblemen had not the right to marry till they had learned to read and write. Besides, some institutions were founded for special classes, such as engineers, the marine, and a school for clerks. At the same time, also, learned works on artillery, fortification, history, etc., began to be translated. Peter, besides, sent many youths abroad, in order that they should become acquainted



with marine service. Even in the very Russian alphabet transformation was effected. Instead of former inconvenient letters, used by the church for contraction, others, like those of the Latin alphabet, were introduced. We have already noticed the foundation of the Academy of Sciences (1724).

Peter the Great, also, did not leave the family life of his subjects unremarked. He openly took up arms against the antiquated Oriental habit of shutting up women in domestic captivity, and, on the contrary, strove to develop social life. With these aims he introduced in the capital so-called 'assemblies,' at which nobles and others of the wealthier classes should, during the winter, on a certain day, receive guests of both sexes, invited and uninvited.

Berchgoltz, gentleman-in-waiting in the suite of the duke of Holstein (Peter's son-in-law, consort of Anna Petrovna), lived several years in Russia, and kept a diary from 1720 till 1725. From it we become acquainted with some customs of that epoch. While describing the above-mentioned assemblies, Berchgoltz, in conclusion, remarks :—

'But what chiefly displeases me in these assemblies is, first of all, that in the dancing-room, where ladies are present, men smoke tobacco and play at draughts. Hence there is an unpleasant smell and also a disagreeable tumbling noise. In the second place, the ladies are all seated apart from the men, so that it is impossible to talk with the former. While they do not dance, they all sit like so many dumb beings and look at each other.' (Ilovaiski, p. 260.)

From these remarks we clearly see that, women being hitherto quite unaccustomed to the society of men, and also on account of rudeness in the latter, beneficial changes could by no means be easily effected.

Besides these assemblies, Peter, on various festivals, had masquerades and processions, in which jesters enacted a chief part. Festivities at court, as well as the launching of a new vessel, were usually accompanied by joyous drinking matches, during which none had a right to refuse incessant toasts. Peter, in fact, formed a special company called 'the general drinking college.' It had twelve cardinals and a prince-pope as the head. They were obliged to drink more than others on the occasion of imperial festivals. Berchgoltz, however, seems to consider that institution as a satire.

Peter also insisted that henceforth a bride and bridegroom should have time to become acquainted with each other. He then appointed an interval of six weeks between the betrothal and marriage, so that the latter might be broken off if unpleasant to either party. Hitherto, marriages in Russia had been arranged entirely by parents or guardians, without the consent of bride and bridegroom, and sometimes when they did not even know each other.

## CHAPTER X

## THE CLERGY AND THE RASKOLNIKS, OR OLD BELIEVERS

ONE important change effected in church government by Peter the Great was that he abolished the patriarchate, which often came in collision with the imperial power. When the patriarch Adrian died (1700)—an adherent to old customs and an enemy to new innovations—Peter did not appoint a successor, so that affairs belonging to the jurisdiction of the patriarch were transacted by Stephen Yavorski, metropolitan of Riazane. He was then entitled ‘guardian of the patriarchal see.’ Besides, in order to administer affairs of the church, a kind of college was instituted, formed of the higher clergy, and named ‘The Most Sacred Synod’ (1721). The president of the synod was the above-mentioned Stephen Yavorski, one of the most eloquent preachers and among the best clerical writers of his time. A well-known work by him is entitled *The Signs of a coming Antichrist*, written to refute the sectarian teaching of an author named Taleetzki, who in Peter’s reforms saw the signs of a coming Antichrist. (Taleetzki was executed.) Another work, *The Stone of Belief*, was written by Yavorski against Protestant doctrines spread in Moscow by a physician, Tveritinov, and his associates. *The Stone of Belief* was printed after the death of Peter. The latter, however, eventually cooled towards Yavorski, as he somewhat favoured old customs, and was against reform. Peter then paid more attention to Theophan Prokopovitch, archbishop of Pskov. Theophan was commissioned by Peter to write regulations for the synod. These regulations stipulated that each bishop should have his own school, in order to prepare the clergy to fill their sacred office. Unlettered sons of church servants were to be made soldiers. The act of entering monastic life, and also the former freedom of monks, were both considerably restricted. Inspection of monastic affairs, such, for example, as management of their revenue and peasants, Peter assigned to a particular tribunal for monasteries, composed of lay members. In order to limit the number of monks, Peter ordered old men and retired soldiers to live permanently in monasteries. Part of the monastic revenue was henceforth to be devoted to almshouses. The greater part of family affairs previously referred to the judgment of the church, Peter, by law, remitted to the judgment of the laity. He also repeated an ukase of his father, Alexei Michaelovitch, that all professing the Russo-Greek faith should be present at church on festivals. For failing to be so, a fine was imposed. Foreigners had nearly entire freedom to



profess their own religion, while, on the contrary, rigorous measures against the Raskolniks, or so-called Old Believers, were still in full force.

However, the persecution, begun during the reign of Alexei Michaelovitch, not only did not eradicate the schism, but, on the contrary, excited the schismatics to energy and fanaticism. The persecuted took refuge in northern forests, or the steppes of the Don and the Volga, or, in different directions, fled towards the Swedish and Polish frontiers, and there formed entire companies. In fact, from the epoch of Peter's reforms, the so-called Raskol or schism began to augment still more, and at last had not only a religious, but even a political signification. For many of Peter's innovations and his zealous imitation of foreign customs were misunderstood by the common people, who saw in them only violations of nationality and of the Russo-Greek faith. Such, for example, were considered the use of tobacco, the shaving of the beard, the alteration of ancient national costumes, the abolition of the patriarchate, etc. Not only so: the severe measures which accompanied these reforms, the heavy taxes which burdened the people, the laborious work imposed upon them, still more excited the spirit of discontent. Those bolder and more obstinate fled to forests, to steppes, or even went abroad, and there joined the Raskol.

But towards the close of the seventeenth century, among the schismatics themselves there was division. The priests of the Raskolniks, nominated before the Moscow council of 1667, in course of time all died out, and their places were filled by those who had "seceded from the Russo-Greek (or Pravoslavni) church. Moreover, they had been appointed by so-called Nikonite bishops (or those who accepted corrected church books). Accordingly, many of the Old Believers did not consider the new as really priests. Others, however, did so. The first party of the Raskol was called Bez-pop-ovshina, or sect without priests. The second was named Pop-ovshina, or sect with priests. But each of these sects was again subdivided into several parties. The Pop-ovshina chiefly spread among the woods of Kostroma and Nijui-Novgorod (Kerjenski), along the Don and the Kuban, in the Tscherneegov districts, even in Siberia and on the Vetké (government of Mogilev, then beyond the Polish frontiers). The Bez-pop-ovshina, or sect without priests, chiefly spread in the ancient Novgorodian districts, or in the forests of Olonetz and the northern regions, towards the White Sea. There, especially, many Raskolniks found refuge after the taking of the Solovetsk monastery. There also was formed the sect, so famous in history, and named the Veeigoretzki hermitage.

The active, energetic nature, so remarkable in the character of these Northern inhabitants, accustomed to a constant struggle with the severe climate of their



country, not a little aided the great extension of the Raskol; silent, impenetrable forests, stormy lakes, wild rocks, ravines, marshes, presented places of shelter, seldom exposed to interruption by government functionaries. Accordingly, there it was that adherents of old customs and fugitive serfs wended their way. They cleared the forest valleys, tilled the ground, planted corn, built hermitages, and in general led a laborious existence. At the first appearance of military, sent to destroy the hermitages and to capture the hermits, the latter were always ready to quit one place of refuge for another. Sometimes, too, carried away by religious fanaticism, they shut themselves up in their monasteries and set fire to them. These hermits or ancient monks, distinguished by the gift of utterance, by piety, and by constant study of Scripture, became instructors of others, and obtained vast influence over the society of schismatics. Among such were especially remarkable Daniel Vikoolov, as well as the brothers André and Simeon Denisov (posterity of the Princes Meeshetzk). They founded and built on the river Veega a general retreat, or so-called Veegovski hermitage (1695), which ultimately became the centre of the Bez-pop-ovshina. The brothers Denisov left some compositions much esteemed by the Raskolniks. Two works of Simeon Denisov are particularly diffused among the Old Believers. The first is a *History of the Fathers and Sufferers of Solovetzk*. The second is entitled *The Clerical Orchard, or the Russian Vine*. In the former are details of the revolt of the Raskolniks at Solovetzk. In the latter are described different acts of the early teachers of the Raskolniks, such as those of Paul, bishop of Kolomensk, and of the archpriest Avvakium, etc.

Although Peter I. acknowledged the civil existence of the Raskol, he, notwithstanding, did so with oppressive restrictions. He ordered an exact enumeration to be made of the Raskolniks, and on them were levied double taxes. Besides, the schismatics were not allowed to enter the civil service. They were obliged to wear a peculiar costume. For wearing the beard a separate duty was likewise paid. During the latter years of Peter's reign (especially after the affair of Prince Alexei Petrovitch), severity towards the Raskolniks increased.

Peter, however, not only endeavoured to act against the Raskolniks by means of punishment, but he also made use of persuasion. According to his desire, the senate sent to Olonetz and the northern maritime districts a certain monk named Neophite, in order to hold disputations with the Old Believers. Neophite thereupon proposed more than a hundred questions. In reply to them a whole book was written, chiefly by Simeon Denisov, and entitled *Maritime Replies* (1723). But even at an earlier period (1719) the Pop-ovshina sectarians,

inhabiting the Kerjinski hermitages, presented to Pitirem, bishop of Nijni-Novgorod, a similar book, known by the name of *Kerjinski Replies*. Nearly all the more celebrated bishops of Peter's time wrote works against the Raskol. The most remarkable of them are from the pen of the mild, truthful St. Dmitri, metropolitan of Rostov. In them he mentions many other sects. But these compositions produced little effect. In general, during the struggle against the schism, preaching and exhortation could not be successful, from the want of public schools for the people, and also from the small degree of enlightenment which prevailed among the teachers nearest to the lower orders. We allude to the village clergy. In fact, the country priests of that epoch could scarcely read, while their scanty means of subsistence induced them to pay more attention to their small portion of ground than to the instruction of their flocks. One contemporary of Peter I., named Pososhkov, a commercial man, in his work entitled *Penury and Wealth*, thus remarks:—'In Russia, our village priests live by their labour, and are in no wise distinguished from peasants who work the ground. The peasant is at the plough, and the priest is at the plough. The peasant reaps corn, and the priest reaps corn, while the holy church and the spiritual flock are set aside. From this agricultural work many Christians die without confession and communion.' Pososhkov then continues to describe how individuals unable even to read were, notwithstanding, made priests. Archbishops' servants received gifts from new candidates for holy orders, made them learn some psalms by heart, then, in presence of the archbishop, the candidates were obliged to read. As they appeared to do so fluently and well, the archbishop thereupon gave them his blessing as priests. Karamzine also mentions that during the reign of John the Terrible (1534-1584) many priests learned the church service by heart, as they were totally unable to read (see Ilovaiski, pp. 260-264).

## CHAPTER XI

### CHARACTERISTICS AND SIGNIFICATION OF REFORM INTRODUCED IN RUSSIA

BY PETER THE GREAT

THE numerous hindrances and grief which Peter the Great experienced from the upholders of ancient customs induced him not unfrequently to make use of severe measures, in order to execute his plans of reform. Those who dared to disobey imperial ukazes were sometimes mercilessly beaten with sticks, or sent into exile, and there compelled to work as felons. Not unfrequently, too, the guilty were deprived of property and even of life. To see that orders were strictly



obeyed, new officials called fiscals, *i.e.* spies or informers, were appointed. These fiscals were placed in each college, in each chancery of the government; and in every provincial town, one was to be there. Sometimes even two were nominated. For the benefit of the fiscals was assigned half the money paid in fines. Reform occasioned frequent expressions of discontent, and there were especially a great many libels. In order to investigate similar affairs, Peter instituted the 'Preobrazhenski Public Office,' in Moscow (about 1702). The commander of that office was the stern Romodonovski, a favourite of the sovereign, who received from him the title of Prince Cæsar. Those who wished to denounce designs against Peter, and denunciation in such cases was obligatory, pronounced the expression, 'Word and deed!' The denunciator and those whom he accused were immediately taken for investigation and tortured in the torture-chamber of the secret chancery.

The reform introduced by Peter I. aimed at copying European customs and institutions. But these foreign customs and institutions, transported to Russian soil, did not always suit the natural condition of the country and the character of the people. In fact, much good effected by ukazes speedily lost its strength and was abused, simply because it did not suit the Russians, and was not in accordance with their degree of enlightenment.

Pososhkov thus complains of the want of justice and the oppression of the lower classes:—'With us, faith is sacred and beneficial; but judicial administration is worth nothing, and pays no attention to imperial ukazes. Each acts according to his own habits; so that peasants leave their homes and actually flee from injustice. Until regular judicial administration is introduced in Russia, we will never be rich, and we will not obtain good fame.'

According to Pososhkov, one great source of evil to peasants was that they could neither read nor write. For many impostors came to the country, brought with them false ukazes, and then levied unjust fines. Concerning the difficulties with which the great reformer-sovereign had to struggle, Pososhkov remarks:—

'Our great monarch drags up the mountain a burden fit for ten, while a whole million is dragging in an opposite direction under the mountain. So how is he to maintain the contest?'

But notwithstanding all the obstacles which Peter had to encounter, his untiring activity, without example in history, communicated new life and strength to the Russian state, and consequently to Russian nationality also. In this wise, no sovereign had ever better merited the surname of 'The Great.'

The most visible features of that wonderful activity are more especially remarkable in administrative and social reform. By it Peter improved the mechanism of state, and promoted concentration of the empire. He facilitated



the further approach of Russia towards western Europe, and the immediate adoption of European science. He created many branches of industry, and increased commercial activity. By the speedy formation of regular armies, by the organisation of a fleet, by obtaining the shores of the Baltic Sea, he succeeded in elevating Russia to a high degree of power, and laid the foundation of its influence on the system of European politics.

One contemporary, in his writings, thus expresses himself concerning Peter:—

‘This monarch has caused our native country to be compared with others. He has taught them to know that we are a people. In a word, at whatever we look in Russia, all has its beginning in him: and, whatever happens in future, we will draw from his resources.’ Illovaïski truly says (p. 266):—

‘The second half of the seventeenth century was essentially the moment in history when, on the continent of Europe, great efforts were made to promote the concentration of states and the formation of regular armies. The chief representative of these efforts was Louis XIV. of France.’

Concerning Peter’s own views of results produced in Russia by his activity, and particularly the progress of civilisation, we may partially infer from the remarks of Weber. The latter, as resident of Brunswick, was in St. Petersburg during the reign of Peter the Great, and subsequently published a work entitled *Transformed Russia* (*Das Veränderte Russland*).

‘In 1714,’ says Weber, ‘Peter, on one occasion, was celebrating the launching of a newly-built vessel. On the deck he was seated surrounded by his ministers, generals, and some of the so-called “Old Russian People,” i.e. the old boyards, who by no means willingly saw his innovations. Turning towards these boyards, Peter said: “Which of you brothers, thirty years ago, would have thought that now, here, on the shores of the Baltic Sea, you would work along with me dressed in German costume, and that we would build a city on land conquered by our labour and our bravery? And did you think that you would see so many brave, victorious soldiers and sailors from among the Russian people, so many learned sons returned to their own homes from foreign lands, so many foreign tradesmen and artisans in our country? And did you think that you would live to see us so honoured by foreign potentates? Historians indicate Greece as the ancient cradle of all sciences, whence, by the will of Providence, they were expelled and went to Italy, and then were spread in all European countries. But the negligence of our ancestors forbade these sciences to penetrate further than Poland. For at that epoch the Poles, as well as the Germans, were in the same darkness as we were until now. But by unrelenting labour of their sovereigns,

these nations have opened their eyes, and have adopted the arts, sciences, and customs of ancient Greece."

'Then Peter continued to remark that now was the turn of Russia, *i.e.* of the Russians (or more particularly those present), to aid him in his undertakings, and to show unconditional obedience.'

## CHAPTER XII

### CO-OPERATORS OF PETER THE GREAT

PETER THE GREAT distinguished himself by the peculiar art of selecting suitable individuals to aid in the execution of his important plans.

A prominent place among statesmen who surrounded the reformer-sovereign is assigned to Alexander Danilovitch Menshikov. After the death of François Lefort (1699), Menshikov was nearest the monarch's person; for when Peter attained mature age, although he still continued to distinguish foreigners and to attract them to his service, he, however, did not nominate them to the first place in the state.

The tradition concerning Menshikov, that during his early youth he had sold pies, is not confirmed. Menshikov had received very little education, but, along with great talent, he also combined much ambition and love of gain. As a new individual, and one, moreover, in all indebted to what was new, Menshikov had no sympathy with old customs, and thus still more pleased the reformer-sovereign. But Menshikov, although a zealous co-operator of reform which did not interfere with his own interest, notwithstanding always preferred it to the good of the state; so that more than once he was convicted of extortion, and only by Peter's special favour escaped from merited punishment. Besides, Menshikov had not sufficient magnanimity to resist the temptations attendant on extraordinary success. He forgot himself, became self-conceited, and thought, by arrogant manners, to obliterate the remembrance of his humble origin. And the temptations were indeed strong; for Peter conferred on his favourite a position above that of a subject. But Peter, at the close of his reign, cooled towards Menshikov.

Another prominent place at the court of Peter the Great was occupied by Count Boris Petrovitch Sheremetev, a talented, enlightened man, one of the Russian nobles belonging to the second half of the seventeenth century who had allured Peter towards the West and its civilisation. Field-marshal Sheremetev, when already forty-five years old, went abroad in order to study military sciences.



He returned to Russia dressed according to the German fashion, which much delighted Peter. Sheremetev's military exploits we already noticed, during the description of the Northern War; while tradition still preserves the remembrance of his moral worth, his benevolence, his extreme honesty and generosity.

At the court of Peter the Great, the representative of an ancient, celebrated race—that of the Golitzines—was the senator, Prince Dmitri Michaelovitch, a man of great mind, but of a stern, even somewhat cruel disposition. His aristocratic pride was affronted because Peter promoted those of low origin to prominent places, and because those individuals were much nearer the sovereign and possessed more power and influence than Golitzine himself. Prince Dmitri Michaelovitch was likewise highly displeased at the distinction conferred on foreigners in Russia, and he had been at enmity with the unhappy Patkul. Finally, Prince Dmitri could in no wise become reconciled to Peter's second marriage to the Livonian prisoner, Martha Skovronskaia, afterwards Ekaterina Alexéevna.

A marked contrast to Prince Dmitri Michaelovitch Golitzine was his brother, Prince Michael, brave, generous, magnanimous, honest to a fraction, one of the most attractive among all Peter's nobles. However, like his elder brother, Prince Michael Michaelovitch Golitzine had also no particular admiration for foreigners. Notwithstanding, these very foreigners spoke in raptures of his mind, his affability, his bravery and magnanimity. Of Prince Michael Golitzine it is narrated that, after the battle at Liesno, Peter liberally rewarded Golitzine, but asked what other favour he yet desired. 'Sire,' replied Golitzine, 'pardon Prince Repnine!' Repnine was Golitzine's enemy. It is also narrated of Prince Michael Golitzine, that when already field-marshal and father of a numerous family, he, notwithstanding, would not seat himself in presence of his elder brother, Prince Dmitri Michaelovitch.

Another distinguished contemporary and co-operator of Peter the Great was Count James Daniel Bruce, known for his learning. According to popular tradition, Bruce was considered an astrologer and acquainted with the black art. A calendar still circulated in Russia bears his name. Broosovski Street, where Bruce's house formerly stood, still exists in Moscow. His father, Colonel William Bruce, had also been in the service of Russia. He was descended from an ancient Scottish race, said to be allied to King Robert the Bruce.

Ilovaïski states (p. 267) that at the court of Peter the Great there were three men who never accepted bribes, but who were known for their remarkable honesty. Count James Daniel Bruce was one. The others were the wise, enlightened field-marshal Count Boris Petrovitch Sheremetev, and the noble, brave, magnanimous Prince Michael Michaelovitch Golitzine. For although many



of Peter's co-operators were undoubtedly endued with talent, and were useful to the state, they, however, were not always possessed of moral worth.

'Indeed, the chief vices of that half-civilised period,' continues Ilovaiski, 'were to amass wealth at the cost of the state, to accept bribes, to conceal truth from Peter, if that truth prejudiced personal interest. Sometimes Peter, when enraged by frequent cheating, severely punished dignitaries convicted of extortion and theft. For example, he executed the chief-fiscal Nesterov, and ordered Prince Gagarine, governor of Siberia, to be hanged. Those immediately near Peter's own person were more frequently punished by fines, or even by blows from a good thick stick in his hand.'

Another upright nobleman of this period was the senator Prince Yakov Feodorovitch Dolgorookov, magnanimous, brave, true. He even had frequently courage openly to disagree in opinion with Peter, although the latter scarcely tolerated contradiction. It is said that once Dolgorookov went so far as to arrest an ukaze of the great sovereign, because it was contrary to the good of his subjects.

Tatischev, in the preface to his *History of Russia*, gives the following details concerning Prince Yakov Feodorovitch Dolgorookov :—

'In 1717 Peter, on one occasion, while at a banquet, was conversing with the nobles regarding acts of his father, Alexei Michaelovitch, and the patriarch Nikon. Whereupon Count Moosine Poushkine began to undervalue Alexei Michaelovitch compared with Peter. The latter was, however, grieved, and, rising from the table, said: "By blaming my father, and hypocritically praising me, thou reproachest me more than I can bear." Then approaching Dolgorookov, and standing near his chair, Peter continued: "Thou scoldest me more than any. Sometimes even thy keen disputes offend me so much, that I can hardly support them. But I see and feel that thou lovest myself and the state sincerely, and that thou speakest the truth. I therefore thank thee in my heart. So now, I beg of thee to speak of my father's actions and of mine own without hypocrisy."

"So be it, sire!" replied Dolgorookov. "Sit down, and I shall think over it." Then, after thinking a little, and stroking his long moustache, according to his usual custom, he rejoined: "The most important acts of a sovereign are three. The first is inward administration, and one urgent affair is the administration of justice. In that, thy father did more than thou hast done. Another affair concerns all that is military. Thy father did much in this wise, and did much good to the state; but thou, by organising regular forces, hast shown the way how his plans, impossible to execute, have been put aside. So hast thou done all anew, and brought all into better condition. The third of thy important acts

concerns the fleet. In forming it, in establishing alliance and intercourse with foreigners, thou hast done much more for the state and acquired more glory for thyself than thy father did. So all this I hope thou wilt receive as the truth!"

Peter patiently listened to all, rose, kissed Dolgoroukov, and exclaimed: 'Well done, good and faithful servant! thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord!' (See Ilovaiski, p. 68.)

In secret commissions and investigations Peter's right hand was the inconstant, double-minded, talented Count Peter Andréévitch Tolstoi.

Tolstoi had participated in the strelitz revolt, which favoured the Princess Sophia Alexéevna, but he had managed to escape punishment; and, in order to please Peter, went abroad to learn when already a man past forty. Peter pardoned Tolstoi, and placed him highly, on account of his gifted mind. Tolstoi, however, had gradually mounted the social ladder by the protection of his relative, General-Admiral Apraxine, and also by making presents to influential personages. Golovkine, chancellor (or manager) of foreign intercourse, known for his grasping disposition, procured Tolstoi, for money, the important post of Russian ambassador at Constantinople. On returning from Turkey, Tolstoi gave Menshikov 20,000 roubles, and, through his help, became one of the individuals nearest the sovereign's person. Peter, however, did not forget Tolstoi's antecedents, or, in other words, that he had taken part in the strelitz revolt; and therefore did not believe in his newly professed fidelity. It is even said that more than once, in merry drinking parties, Peter pulled off Tolstoi's big wig (then in fashion), patted him on the head and exclaimed: 'O head, head! If thou wert not so clever, I would long ago have given orders to cut thee off!' (Ilovaiski, p. 268.)

In 1722, after instituting in the senate the important post of general-procurator, Peter assigned it to the talented Yagoojinski, raised from the humble ranks of life. As a dignitary who inspected every department of administration, Yagoojinski was surnamed 'the sovereign's eye.'

The rank of general-admiral was borne, during Peter's time, by Count Feodor Alexéévitch Golovine, and afterwards by Count Feodor Matvéévitch Apraxine. Golovine, however, was chiefly occupied with foreign intercourse. After Golovine, foreign affairs were managed by Count Gavreel (Gabriel) Ivanovitch Golovkine, in capacity of grand chancellor. The vice-chancellor was Baron Shafeerov, promoted from being a clerk at the public office of ambassadors. Shafeerov rendered great service to the state, especially in difficult intercourse with Turkey, after the peace



of the Pruth. But, during the last years of Peter's reign, enmity between Menshikov and Shafeerov ruined the latter. Deprived of all his duties, he was exiled.

In the diplomatic line the Princes Dolgorookov, Gregory Ivanovitch, and Vasili Lookitch, Count André Artomonovitch Matvéev, and Prince Roorakine were known. In the same line also began the career of Artemeus Voleenski and the subsequently celebrated Alexei Petrovitch Beztoojev.

In the financial department, Alexander Alexandrovitch Koorbatov was especially remarkable. He was a man of humble origin, and became known to Peter on account of forming the project of stamped paper.

Baron Osterman, son of a German pastor, also became famous during Peter's reign. Osterman had an acute, penetrating mind, and was a first-class diplomatist of his time. He rendered many services to his new country. To him Peter was indebted for the advantageous conditions of the Neustadt peace. Indeed, according to Peter's opinion, 'Osterman was one who never made mistakes in diplomacy.'

However, in spite of brilliant mental qualities, Osterman was at the same time double-minded, deceitful, and unscrupulous regarding means he employed to gain his ends.

Another foreigner who enacted a distinguished part at Peter's court was Munnich. He only entered the Russian service in 1721. As an excellent engineer, Munnich's services were important at the construction of the canal of Ladoga. In 1724, Peter, when already attacked by his last illness, remarked: 'The labour of my Munnich has made me well!'

Amongst the first nobles of Peter's court, and among the first Knights of St. André, was the Little Russian hetman Mazeppa, but we have already seen how he finished his career. Indeed, Mazeppa's treachery decided the fate of the hetmans in Peter's mind; so that he gradually began to think of abolishing that dignity. Skoropadski, a man by no means far-sighted, was exactly an individual such as Peter needed in order to commence this preparation: for Skoropadski was but the shadow of a hetman. In order to prevent treachery on the hetman's part, and also to prevent revolt against him, a functionary from Great or Central Russia was appointed conjointly to administer affairs along with the hetman. Another important step in establishing equality between Great and Little Russia was the fact that inhabitants of the former began to be landed proprietors in the south. Besides, Skoropadski made presents of several districts to Menshikov and Shafeerov. Then, according to Peter's desire, Skoropadski gave his daughter in marriage to Tolstoi, a native of Great Russia, and the hetman's son-in-law obtained



command of the Nejinski regiment. This was the third step: for a native of Great Russia became commander of a Little Russian army.

In 1722, a Little Russian college was instituted, while the Brigadier Viliameenov and six staff officers were ordered to be placed near the hetman. During that very year Skoropadski died, and his successor was not chosen, 'because,' as Peter intimated, 'the treachery of other hetmans did not admit of haste in the decision of so important an affair as a new election, and because, also, it was necessary to seek out a trustworthy, well-known individual to fill a position so responsible.'

Of course the previous Moscovite clergy, from the scantiness of their information, could not aid Peter in his important work of reform. On that account, he chiefly promoted the learned men of Kiev to the first places in the church, such, for example, as Stephen Yavorski, Dmitri of Rostov, and Theodosius Yanovski, archimandrite of the Alexandrovski cloister. An able defender of reform appeared in the person of the gifted Theophan Prokopovitch.

In 1706, on one occasion when Peter was in Kiev in the Sophiovski cathedral, at the conclusion of the service a young monk pronounced an oration. He cleverly alluded to political events, spoke eloquently, but without the scholarly bombast of preachers at that epoch. Peter inquired the orator's name, and learned that it was Theophan Prokopovitch. Theophan, during his early youth, had studied at the Kiev academy. Then he completed his education at a Jesuit college of Rome, and eventually became one of the teachers in the academy of Kiev.

After the battle of Poltava, Prokopovitch had met Peter in Kiev, and pronounced a speech of congratulation. Peter felt attracted to the talented monk, and some years afterwards summoned him to St. Petersburg and made him an archpriest.

In his sermons and compositions, written on occasion of Peter's most important acts of administration, Prokopovitch from reason and Scripture endeavoured to prove the sacredness of a sovereign's will, and blamed, as ignorant men, the adherents of old customs. In religious questions, Prokopovitch showed a certain degree of free-mindedness, and disliked restriction in his mode of life, for which reasons he more than once was accused of heresy by those envious of his fame, or others adverse to reform.

Among remarkable archpriests of Peter's time we must also mention St. Metrophan, bishop of Voronej, and Job, metropolitan of Novgorod. The latter, from the archpriest's funds, founded schools, hospitals, and refuges for orphans in Novgorod.

After the battle of Narva (19th November, 1701) Peter ordered the

Novgorodians, without distinction of rank, age, or sex, to dig a trench around the town. General murmurs then ensued. Whereupon the venerable archpriest, aged eighty years, was the very first to issue from the town, simply clad, with a spade in his hand, and began to dig the earth. Thus quietness was restored. (See Ilovaiski, p. 270; also *Dictionary of Celebrated Russians*, by D. Banteesh-Kamenski.)

#### DOMESTIC HABITS OF PETER THE GREAT

As a strict administrator of state, Peter observed carefulness even in the most minute details of everyday life. Only on great occasions did Catherine appear in magnificence at his court. Otherwise, extreme simplicity was remarkable in all surrounding him. The list of his courtiers included a few 'denschiki,' or soldier-servants; and his annual expenditure amounted to from thirty-five to fifty thousand roubles. His usual dinner consisted of a very few ordinary dishes, and did not continue longer than half an hour. As he disliked fish, he on fast days merely ate bread and fruit. His favourite beverage was Russian kvass (or small beer). His usual attire was an army uniform. Not unfrequently, the Autocrat of the North was to be seen wearing mended worsted stockings and old patched shoes. As he observed carefulness in all, he attentively remarked the mode of life led by his subjects, and endeavoured to find out if they had heaped up wealth by extortion. In the latter case, he severely punished them.

Peter the Great spent little time in repose. His sleep was not prolonged more than five hours. It also not unfrequently happened that if he awoke during the night he would order candles and a slate to be brought. Then he would write down his projects for the following day. At three o'clock A.M. he left his bed, and for some time continued to read. Then he dressed, listened to reports, and gave them his decision. Afterwards he went to inspect manufactories, foundries, and wharves for shipbuilding. In the latter he very often used himself to work. At eleven o'clock A.M. he sat down to dine. After dinner, he rested a little, and then went to visit schools, hospitals, etc. The evening he passed in friendly, lively conversation. He seldom supped, and at ten o'clock he already felt sleepy. Besides these daily occupations, he likewise made different regulations and statutes, kept up correspondence with foreign powers, and with private individuals from whom he hoped to obtain useful information, to be introduced in Russia. He also exercised his troops. Nearly each day he was present in the senate or at the admiralty, and as for shipbuilding wharfs, it was truly remarked that 'not one nail was fastened without his inspection.'

Even during moments of apparent leisure, Peter the Great found relaxation in



what would have appeared labour to others. Such, for example, was the foundation of St. Petersburg. He also took delight in collecting and arranging Russian annals, as well as in forming a library at the mint. He likewise put in order a great many articles which he had bought when abroad. Among them were paintings, objects of natural history, surgical instruments, and tools for carpentry. In the latter art he indeed excelled. He was also fond of studying German, as well as astronomy and other sciences. He used to read Latin authors, and carefully examined school-books translated into Russ from other languages.

After transforming his empire, Peter the Great issued regulations for the clergy, the military, the so-called college courts, and for magistrates. Statutes were made for the marine, for the police, for manufactories and commerce. The synod, the senate, college, courts, and chanceries were instituted. Establishments for instruction were also built, such as the marine academy, the medical college, a clerical seminary, besides town and village schools. Libraries were also formed, such as those of the museum and of the mint. Two hundred books were printed, and others prepared for printing. Russian towns amounted to fifty-five. There were nine havens. Individuals who paid imposts were estimated at a hundred and fifteen thousand; vessels and frigates at fifty-five; other different vessels at eight hundred; copper cannons at seven hundred, and those of cast-iron at twelve thousand. The revenue of the state was estimated at ten millions of silver roubles.

Thus could Peter, on his death-bed, truly say to Russia: 'See how I have left thee!' and such, in fact, is the inscription on a medal struck after the great monarch's decease.

## APPENDIX

PETER I. was wont to acknowledge his greatest faults, *i.e.* a violent, ungovernable temper and a love of strong drink. 'I have reformed my empire, but not myself!' he used to say.

Of his untiring activity we have already spoken. 'Seest thou, brother!' exclaimed Peter, on one occasion, while addressing a marine officer, 'although I am an emperor, I, notwithstanding, have corns on my hands because I work so much, and in order to set you a good example. I desire, if even in old age, to see worthy assistants and servants of Russia!'

Peter was, besides, ever ready to acquire knowledge, and to augment the scanty information he had obtained in early youth. His daughter, Elizabeta Petrovna, used afterwards to relate how, on one occasion, her father saw her and her sister



learning their lessons, and with a sigh exclaimed: 'Ah! had I learned as I ought when young!'

We have already seen that Peter did not usually remain long in the capital. His various military expeditions and journeys obliged him to travel about in different directions. These journeys were undertaken without any pomp, either in sledges, or in so-called 'kibeetkas' (tilt-wagons). Then he was accompanied only by his 'denschik' (soldier-servant), and several youths who acted as chancery clerks. From among them there were sometimes, at last, well-known servants of the state.

## CHAPTER XIII

REIGN OF THE EMPRESS CATHERINE I. (EKATERINA ALEXÉEVNA)—1725-1727

1725-27.

THE question, 'Who was to be the successor of Peter I.?' caused the nobles to be divided into two parties. One was formed of those who adhered to the ancient order of things, and who wished to place on the throne little Prince Peter, grandson of the late emperor and son of the unhappy Alexei Petrovitch. The chief upholders of that party were the Golitzines. But the newer nobles raised to power by Peter the Great opposed the choice of Peter Alexéevitch. This was also the special opinion of those who had acted against his father. The leaders of the second party were Menshikov, Tolstoi, Theophan Prokopovitch, and the minister of Holstein, Count Bassevitch, who was then at the court of Russia, along with the duke of Holstein, bridegroom of Anna Petrovna.

Soloviev affirms (p. 282) that during the very night of Peter's last agony, the nobles had a violent dispute regarding his successor. Prince Dmitri Michaelovitch Golitzine and his associates proposed that the little Prince Peter should be elevated to the throne, under the regency of the empress, along with the senate. To these proposals, however, Menshikov, Tolstoi, and Apraxine replied that contest and agitation would only ensue, while the best way to maintain the power and glory of Russia was to proclaim Catherine autocrat-empress, since her merits had already been acknowledged by her solemn coronation. The adherents of Catherine became all the more powerful because their side was taken by the guards. The soldiers shouted, 'We have lost a father; but we have still a mother left!' As for the officers, they openly said that they would break the heads of the old boyards if the latter opposed the empress. Whereupon Catherine was confirmed in possession of the throne.

The new sovereign then intimated her desire to continue and complete all that

Peter had begun. Accordingly, from his plan, an expedition commanded by Baring was sent in order to solve the question: 'Is Asia joined to America?'

In 1726, at the opening of the Academy of Sciences, a new order was instituted 1726.—that of Alexander Nevski, also from Peter's suggestion.

Then his eldest daughter Anna Petrovna was given in marriage to Charles Frederick, duke of Holstein, intimated by Peter before his death as his daughter's bridegroom. But if, in some respects, haste was made to execute several plans of Peter, on the other hand one of his most important institutions was altered. We allude to the senate, which lost its original signification. For over it was placed the upper secret council, into which the highest senators entered. Such were Menshikov, Apraxine, Golovkine, Tolstoi, Prince Dmitri Michaelovitch, Golitzine. Along with the Russian nobles of the upper council was also the foreigner Baron Osterman. Indeed, the latter was necessary from his capability of supporting protracted sedentary labour, his aptitude for business, his wonderful information, and his knowledge of foreign languages. It was the first instance of a foreigner receiving so important an appointment. The duke of Holstein was likewise included in the upper council. The senate and synod were deprived of the title of 'Administrative.' The former then began to be entitled 'High.'

The members of the upper secret council presented reports to the empress concerning peasants—forming the greater part of the population—how they were ruined by high taxes and by the oppression of officials, so that the former fled to Poland, or elsewhere, and joined the Raskol. It was also stated that affairs in colleges were judged neither with promptitude nor regularity. Thus many who there presented petitions were ruined. Sources for the revenue of state were scanty. Expenditure greatly surpassed the annual income, and no order existed in the management of the treasury. As many functionaries were found to be superfluous and only burdened the people, they were dismissed, and judicial judgment was assigned to voevodes. To them also were submitted town magistrates. The latter arrangement concerning magistrates was, however, a violation of one important institution of Peter the Great, and one much wanted in ancient Russia, *i.e.* to deliver the people from the judicial judgment of district administrators. The previous arrangement, that forces should be quartered in districts, was found onerous to peasants. Accordingly, it was henceforth decreed to quarter troops in the suburbs of towns. Means taken to augment the revenues of state and to lessen its expenditure were as follows:—the collection of arrears, the imposition of new taxes, the number of functionaries was decreased, their salaries were diminished. Finally, to certain officials, instead of regular income, voluntary donations of those who presented petitions were offered.



The important undertaking of forming a new code of laws was continued, although slowly, during Catherine's reign. In order to accelerate its work, the commission was to be augmented by two members of the clergy, the military, citizens, and magistrates. As for the clergy, they were forbidden, without command of the synod, to consecrate monks, except widower-priests or diakons (under-clergy).

Concerning popular instruction, besides the institution of the Academy of Sciences, the following regulations are remarkable:—Peter the Great had ordered all colleges and chanceries to send to printing-presses and to print 'reports of all important circumstances regarding the knowledge of the people.' But, after the death of the reformer-sovereign, the directors of popular instruction in colleges and public offices deemed the publication of such reports unnecessary. Catherine, however, heard that this had taken place without her knowledge, and ordered the printing of the said reports to be continued.

Shafeerov, recalled from exile, formerly vice-chancellor of foreign intercourse, was commissioned to write a *History of Peter the Great*; and, in order to do so, was furnished with necessary information. Orders were then given to send merchants' children first to Riga and Revel to learn, and then abroad.

Concerning manners and customs of that epoch, we remark one special order of the empress. That was nothing less than inspection of boxing-matches. For sometimes those who took part in them would beat their opponents with knives or stones, or throw sand into their eyes.

According to the law made by Peter the Great, Catherine had the right to name as her successor whomsoever she pleased.

The greater number of the higher ranks, and also of the people, favoured Peter Alexéevitch. On his side, too, was the all-powerful Menshikov, because he had quarrelled with the duke of Holstein, whose consort, the Princess Anna Petrovna, the party opposed to Peter wished to see on the throne.

In short, to ensure a solid position during Peter's reign, Menshikov had persuaded the empress to consent to a marriage between his daughter Mary and the young grand prince. So the party of Anna Petrovna lost power. But the pride and bad temper of Menshikov caused him to have many enemies. They, however, were unable to injure him during Catherine's life; and not a few of them were exiled to Siberia and elsewhere. Among such were Count Devier, Tolstoi, Peesarev, and others.

A singular fate was that of one individual, on whom Peter the Great bestowed special favour. We allude to Theodosius Yanovski, archpriest of Novgorod, and a high-class member of the synod when Catherine ascended the throne. His



pride and obstinacy caused his ruin. For allowing himself to utter offensive remarks concerning Catherine, he was arrested, tortured in the secret chancery, and exiled to the monastery of St. Nicholas, at the mouth of the northern Dvina. There Yanovski was kept in close captivity, in a damp dungeon, and known by the name of 'Monk Fedos.' His former post was filled by the subtle, pleasing Theophan Prokopovitch.

The reign of Catherine I. was disturbed by the appearance, in the east, of two pretenders, who called themselves Prince Alexei Petrovitch. Both were executed in St. Petersburg.

Catherine died on May 6, 1727. Peter II., Alexéevitch, was then proclaimed emperor.

In Andréev's fascinating work entitled *Representatives of Power in Russia after Peter I.*, we find the following curious details of the Empress Ekaterina Alexéevna :—

#### 'MARTHA, THE PRISONER OF MARIENBURG

'At the very time when Peter was forming plans against Sweden, in his wooden palace of Praobrajensk, afterwards surrounded by combustibles and set on fire by his own hand, in order that no remembrance of his enmity to that state might remain, a pestilential malady was devastating Livonia. In one parish thus depopulated among others, the pastor and the greater part of his parishioners had died. Pastor Gluck, superintendent of the Marienburg and Lake Papus districts, resolved to visit the said parish, and did so. On entering the deceased pastor's house, Gluck saw a little girl, who ran towards him, called him "Kapa," and asked for something to eat. Pastor Gluck was overwhelmed with business; but the child teased him, so that he was forced to give her a share of his attention. Who was she? It was not difficult to guess that little Martha had been sheltered by the late pastor; but it was much more difficult to know whence she came and who her parents were. Moreover, Pastor Gluck did not stop to ask these questions. Who indeed would answer them? Accordingly, without more hesitation, he took the little girl home to his wife, and Martha was henceforth brought up along with his own children. Not as their equal, however, but only as a servant, for she received no intellectual instruction and could neither read nor write. Nevertheless, Martha grew up a well-formed healthy young girl, although devoid of mental culture. Soon, however, Pastor Gluck and his wife began to observe with uneasiness that Martha pleased their son. They therefore desired to give her in marriage, if a suitable opportunity to do so occurred. And the opportunity did occur. A dragoon named Johann, belonging to the Swedish guard then quartered

in Marienburg, made a proposal to Martha, and Pastor Gluck consented to the match. But not long did fate destine Johann and Martha to remain together.

‘It was at the epoch when Peter the Great, after recovering from the defeat of Narva, began step by step to take Livonia from Charles XII. of Sweden. The turn to seize Marienburg came next. The Swedish forces occupying that town receded. The Russians advanced. The Swedish major left in Marienburg could no longer think of defence. A detachment of Sheremetev’s army approached the town, and awaited its voluntary surrender. Among others who went to meet the victors was Pastor Gluck. He was accompanied by all his household, including Martha, whose young husband had newly gone to rejoin the Swedish army, and separated from Martha to see her no more.

‘Pastor Gluck was a man of tact. He took along with him a Bible in Slavonian, and as he spoke Russ, he did not fail to intimate that he might be useful to Peter. We are ignorant of the effect produced by the Slavonian Bible. We, however, do know more concerning one person who accompanied the pastor. That was Martha. As a prisoner, the booty of war, she was taken to Sheremetev, the Russian commander-in-chief, and Pastor Gluck returned quietly to the town. The combined effects produced by the Slavonian Bible and by Martha were, that after some time Pastor Gluck opened a boarding-school in Moscow.

‘At Sheremetev’s headquarters, Martha soon met with Menshikov. Villebois, a gentleman-in-waiting on Peter the Great, positively declares that Menshikov was speedily captivated by Martha. As for the latter, she was more likely to be pleased with Menshikov as a younger and better-looking man than Sheremetev. Martha did not merely show the submission of a slave in intercourse with her new protector. In fact, very soon, it would have been difficult to say who was the greater slave in Menshikov’s house, the haughty favourite of Peter the Great, or the wife of Johann the Swedish dragoon!

‘At Menshikov’s house, Peter met with Martha, and soon carried her off. But for a certain captain of the guards, Villebois, who in his diary took notes of what he saw, much concerning Martha’s first intercourse with Peter would be unknown. This is especially the case when, some time afterwards, Martha was sent to Moscow, to live with a lady from whom Villebois directly obtained many details. Martha went to Moscow under the special care of a confidential officer of the guards commissioned by Peter to see that every attention was shown her. Daily reports concerning her health were sent to him. She lived in a retired part of the old city, and inhabited a dwelling simple in exterior, but amply furnished within. Peter, however, at first endeavoured to keep his intercourse with her secret, and used to visit her quietly. It notwithstanding came to pass, after some time, that



the Livonian prisoner Martha was transformed into the Empress Ekaterina Alexéevna. There is, however, foundation for supposing that even after the birth of her eldest daughter, Anna Petrovna (1707), Catherine continued to be called Katerina Vasilevskaia, living in St. Petersburg in 1709.

‘But who in reality was Martha? Who were her parents? It may be that Pastor Gluck troubled himself little about the origin of a poor girl he had taken from charity; but of course, as the favourite of Peter I. of Russia, her past history awakened more interest. Was she the natural daughter of a serf-woman and a Livonian proprietor (Rosen), as an English author (Mottley) affirms? He wrote in 1764. Or was Martha the daughter of a peasant from the village of Logovina in Lithuania, the property of a petty nobleman named Laoornetzki? Mottley not only states that Martha was born near Dorpat, in the village of Ringen, where her mother lived at the cost of Colonel Rosen, but adds that, in Ringen, Martha was taken for education by a pastor, who, being very poor, handed her over to Pastor Gluck. However, the details in the notes of Villebois seem more probable as to the way in which Martha became an inmate of Pastor Gluck’s house, more so than those of an English author who wrote about ten years after the circumstances he narrates had been communicated to him. So we shall follow the statements of Villebois. The family of Villebois was at Peter’s court. Mademoiselle Villebois was indeed one of the ladies-in-waiting, nearest the Empress Catherine’s person. Thus, according to Villebois, Martha’s father, Samoilo, fled with her mother from Lithuania to Livonia. Martha was baptized by a Romish priest. Her parents both died of a pestilential illness, as did also the pastor who had sheltered her. Afterwards, in the house of a Protestant pastor, she was brought up as a Protestant. The narration of Villebois seems to us more probable, because subsequently Martha’s relations were found; and, in reality, they were Lithuanian Catholics. Some say they had no family name. According to others, they were called Skovoroshenkami, Skovorotzkami, subsequently from euphony pronounced Skovronski. Martha’s brother Charles lived and died a Catholic. The fact of her having been baptized according to the rites of that religion was known to contemporaries. Martha, as a Russian empress, became Ekaterina Alexéevna, and of course then embraced the Russo-Greek faith. All these changes of religious belief occasioned, in contemporary court circles of Peter’s time, a piece of would-be wit, to the effect that “l’impératrice Catherine a beaucoup de religion.”

‘Finally, let us not forget that Peter himself used every possible means to find out Catherine’s relatives. Even the very way in which her brother Charles was discovered proves that Catherine had been born in the Catholic family of Skovronski, that her elder brother remembered her, that eventually her relations



took interest in her fate. If we also consider that Peter's daughters, Anna and Elizaveta, were both born before he acknowledged his intercourse with Catherine, and only afterwards did he contract a legal union with her, a man who paid so little attention to public opinion as Peter did would certainly not have hesitated to acknowledge that his wife was the natural daughter of Colonel Rosen, as Mottley affirms. These statements concerning Anna and Elizaveta Petrovna we particularly learn from Villebois and Weber, the Brunswick resident in St. Petersburg at that epoch.'

Whence, then, the endless contradictory disputes concerning Catherine's parentage? Andréev adds that doubtless party spirit had much influence on the subject. Let us remark, in passing, that neither Elizaveta Petrovna nor Peter III. wished to acknowledge Catherine's first marriage to Johann, the Swedish dragoon. They said he was only her bridegroom, although Andréev states that her marriage is undoubted. Weber decidedly mentions that Peter's secret marriage to Catherine only took place in 1711. Elizaveta Petrovna was born in 1709.

#### THE EMPRESS EKATERINA ALEXÉEVNA

Peter's intercourse with Martha Skovronskaia long remained unknown, even to those surrounding his person, or, at least, he thought so. But soon the secret could no longer be kept. Martha embraced the Russo-Greek faith, and henceforth was named Ekaterina Alexéevna. Her godfather was Peter's son Alexei. Peter then no longer went alone to the house where Catherine lived. He was often accompanied by ministers or confidential individuals. Conversations regarding different affairs were carried on; and all remarked that although in general Peter disliked when women meddled with serious subjects, he notwithstanding always respectfully listened to Catherine's remarks. For, strange to say, the unlettered Livonian peasant, by her sound common sense and simple unsophisticated reasoning, often extricated those present from difficulty, and cast new light on the question discussed.

Ekaterina received the official title of 'Gosoodarina'—'Gnädige Frau' in German. But 'Gosoodarina' in Russ signifies more than 'Gnädige Frau.' And although near the sovereign's person, Catherine yet seemed invisible to others. Even after the birth of the Princesses Anna and Elizaveta Petrovna, Catherine was officially considered as wife of the court cook. Helbig says that only in 1710 she was entitled 'Fräulein.' Her two daughters were born in Moscow, in the same house to which she was taken from Livonia by the captain of the guards. At last, in 1711, Peter resolved to marry her. That was before his expedition to

Turkey; and Catherine was already so indispensable to Peter that he no longer separated from her. She had a remarkable moral influence over him. If intercession for any one was required, it was always to Catherine that petitions were addressed.

But Bassevitch, the minister of Holstein, mentions another singular fact. We have already noticed the periodical convulsions to which Peter was subject. They were supposed to result from poison, administered to him in early youth by his sister Sophia. The commencement of an attack was recognised by a peculiar nervous twitching of the mouth. Peter was truly frightful to behold when thus assailed. A storm of passion burst forth on all present. He then thought that every one was making an attempt on his life. Violent headache, during the space of three days, succeeded the attack. Such was the case till his intercourse with Catherine. After a scarcely perceptible movement of the mouth, Catherine was summoned. She came and began to speak to him. The sound of her voice seemed to possess a magic influence on Peter. The attack became less powerful. Then he fell asleep for three hours, reposing on Catherine's shoulder. During all that time she remained motionless, in order not to disturb him. Peter then awoke, strong and fresh, and the headache passed.

No wonder that a person so indispensable to Peter made him at last decide to marry her! Peter's sister, Marfa Alexéevna (sometimes also called Mary), advised him to do so. Marfa Alexéevna, however, eventually turned against Peter and took the part of his first consort, Evdokia Lopouchine. But, before consenting to a union with Catherine, it was previously necessary to elevate her in public opinion. The Turkish campaign presented a suitable occasion to do so. Let us remark, in passing, that wherever Peter went, Catherine accompanied him. At the river Pruth, we have already noticed the difficult position in which Peter was placed, and how Catherine extricated him from it, by collecting all the objects of value she had, and making a contribution from the soldiers, in order to send the grand vizier a present, and thus to gain his favour. In fact, but for Catherine, Peter would perhaps sooner have consented to be made prisoner, or even to perish, rather than to take a step which seemed to commit him. But Catherine saved him from this dilemma.

Andréev, notwithstanding, affirms that the proceeding has been overrated. For Catherine and the others well knew, that whatever they sacrificed would be restored to them with interest. Be that as it may, however, her presence of mind was praised and made a means to render her popular with the army. Peter, in fact, required to lead to the hymeneal altar a woman surrounded by a halo, as one who had saved Russia.



It is said that Catherine advised Peter not to intimate their marriage by a second ceremony, but Peter had already resolved to submit to public opinion. Accordingly, their union was openly declared (1712). Martha Skovronskaia was transformed into the sovereign's consort, the Empress Ekaterina Alexéevna, and their children were henceforth entitled Imperial Highnesses.

Peter could at length in no wise exist without Catherine. Where he went, she went. At Astrachan, during the expedition to Persia, she was forced, on account of the terrible heat, to shave her beautiful fair hair, which she had dyed black, and to wear a warm fur hat to protect her head from the burning sun. While accompanying Peter in his campaigns, Catherine drove in a separate conveyance. That of Peter was always distinguished by extreme simplicity, that of Catherine by pomp. Peter, in fact, liked to surround her with luxury and magnificence. Strange to say, Catherine was still the same mild, simple being as of old. Her elevation had not rendered her haughty; and in no wise did she forget what she had been. Not only so: she actually seemed as if she had been created for her new position; so that Peter, subsequently, used to express surprise at her capacity for being an empress. She formed a court, which, at that period of transition, was still distinguished by the existence of some old Russian customs, but where German taste predominated. Foreign guests were in fact astonished at the elegance and brilliancy of Catherine's court, so little to be expected from the previous Esthonian servant-girl! Catherine gave her children a suitable education, although she herself never wished to learn reading and writing, even when she became empress. She always used to say that her chief study now was how to please Peter; and that was enough for her. When she accompanied him during his military expeditions, she left her children to the care of a French governess. In ordinary conversation, she used to call Peter 'Batooshka' (Daddy). She would listen without anger to his account of his own intrigues; although they usually ended with assurance that none could be compared with her. To please Peter, she instituted at her court a sort of chief-butler, or prince-pope, in a woman's dress, and whose duty it was to intoxicate both men and women present. We have already mentioned the hard drinking which formed a hateful peculiarity of Peter's court. This was chiefly the case on great festivals. When the ladies became quite tipsy, Peter used to converse with them alone, or accompanied by some confidential individual. For Peter's reasoning was, that 'what a wise man, if sober, keeps in his mind, a drunkard has at his tongue's end.' Indeed, all drank at Peter's court. Catherine drank, and her young daughters were taught to drink. Elizaveta Petrovna, unfortunately, afterwards only too well profited by the early lessons thus given. She and her sister Anna, while yet children, were sometimes



forced to swallow a fiery cordial, mixed with pepper, which made the saliva run from their mouths for a quarter of an hour.

As for Peter himself, his doctor Areskine used to say 'that he was possessed by a whole legion of sensual demons.'

Bassevitch states that Catherine implored Peter to pardon Alexei, and to shut him up in a cloister, if his offences merited punishment. Although that is recorded by one who could only say what was good of Catherine, it notwithstanding agrees with the general mildness of her disposition. She sincerely loved Alexei's unhappy consort, Sophia Charlotte Cecilia, and watched over their children, both during Peter's life and afterwards also. Catherine used often to say to Peter that as their own son, Peter Petrovitch, was of very delicate health, Alexei's children should be brought up so as to maintain the honour of the Russian throne. In general, Catherine cannot be called an ambitious woman. It is true that, even before having the prospect of becoming empress, she asked Peter to form a separate principality for her, consisting of the Baltic regions conquered from the Swedes. That, however, may be attributed to the influence of Menshikov. For Menshikov retained his influence over Catherine, even after she became empress. In fact, it was owing to Catherine's intercession that Menshikov was frequently saved from Peter's stick. Peter used to call Catherine and Menshikov 'the children of his heart,' and each strove that Peter's favour should not be withdrawn from the other. Notwithstanding, the avidity of Prince Ijorski (Menshikov) often did exasperate Peter. Indeed, latterly, he cooled towards his favourite. At first, Menshikov was very glad that Catherine had replaced Peter's former favourite, Mademoiselle Mons-de-la-Croix, a very unamiable person, while Catherine, on the contrary, very often interceded for the unhappy Menshikov. Menshikov it probably was who urged the naturally unselfish Catherine to accept money from those who presented petitions to Peter, and to place that money in banks of Amsterdam and Hamburg. At least, the third party in that transaction decidedly was Menshikov. As for him, his attachment to Catherine was evidently never sincere. Witness his violent dispute with Bassevitch concerning succession to the throne. A man who owed so much to Catherine as Menshikov did, notwithstanding dared to say that her daughters could not reign, because they were born during the life of her first husband, Johann the Swedish dragoon, from whom she had not been divorced. Consequently, the young princesses were not lawful heir-esses to the throne. The latter remark, perhaps, was true regarding Anna Petrovna. It is said that Peter secretly married Catherine after January 1707, although, as we have already mentioned, Weber maintains that the secret union only took place in 1711. The marriage was openly acknowledged in 1712. According to

Bassevitch, who was well informed on such subjects, Anna Petrovna was born January 27, 1707. Be that as it may, however, it was certainly not for Menshikov to bring all that up against Catherine, in a dispute with the minister of Holstein.

As for the Swedish dragoon Johann, there are different reports concerning him. According to some, he participated in the expedition of Charles XII. to Russia, fought at Poltava, was made prisoner, like many other Swedes, intimated in Moscow the relationship he (Johann) bore to Catherine, and thus hoped to mitigate his fate. But, in spite of all that, he was sent along with not a few of his countrymen to Siberia, and there he died in 1718, *i.e.* after the birth of all Peter's children by Catherine. Whether Peter knew these particulars or not is uncertain. On the other hand, there is a statement that Peter did try to find out Johann, in order to make him some amends for the loss of his wife. But all attempts to do so were fruitless, and it was supposed he had been killed. As for Catherine, she knew nothing for certain, whether Johann had been in Russia or not; and, from the day on which they separated at Marienburg, she saw him no more. However, on meeting the Swedish general Slippenbach, as prisoner, she reminded him that Johann had served in his corps, and remarked: 'Was not my Johann a brave fellow?' Slippenbach would have been a bad courtier had he not replied that he was proud of the honour of having such a youth under his command, although the Swedish general could scarcely be personally acquainted with a simple dragoon, who himself was ignorant of the fate awaiting his wife.

Catherine's interview with her brother Charles was brought about, according to Villebois, in this wise. It once happened that the Polish ambassador, travelling from Moscow to Dresden, heard, in a dirty little spot of Lithuania, how a servant-boy in an inn was quarrelling with his fellow-servants, and screamed out with all his might that he had but to say one word to some powerful relatives, and then all those against him would have unpleasant news. The ambassador narrated the whole scene as a joke, in a letter sent to Moscow. During the eighteenth century, as also in the present day, letters did not always keep secrets. The statements of the Polish ambassador finally reached Peter. By his desire Repnina, governor of Riga, sought out the servant-boy who had spoken so mysteriously, and obtained information regarding him. It then was proved that the very servant in question was Charles Samoilov, Catherine's own brother! To save appearances; an affair against him was set on foot, and he was brought to St. Petersburg. Peter saw him at the house of Shapéelov the court steward, and listened to the affair. Then Charles Samoilov was ordered to return the next day. Catherine, seated in a corner near a window, also listened to what was going on. Catherine changed countenance when the young man, so like herself, was con-



versing with the sovereign. At last, Peter led him towards her. 'There is thy sister,' said he. 'Kiss the hem of her garment and her hand, as empress; and then, kiss her as a sister.' Whereupon Catherine fainted. And it is easily understood why she did so. She saw again the brother she had not seen for many years, and who recalled to her mind not a few remembrances of the past.

### THE EMPRESS CATHERINE I.

For some time Peter had thought of crowning Catherine; and, finally, his design was executed in Moscow, on May 6, 1724.

Peter, in fact, knew that, as an autocrat, his will was sufficient for Catherine's elevation to the throne. Notwithstanding, how could he answer for the future? He was only too well aware that those who most hypocritically flattered her during his life might be the very first to become her enemies when he had passed away. On November 15, 1723, he issued a manifesto, in which he quoted examples of Greek emperors who had crowned their consorts, and concluded by intimating that he himself had resolved to crown Catherine also. He did still more. In presence of state dignitaries he expatiated on Catherine's services to the empire—the care she had taken of his health, the fatigue she had undergone while accompanying him in different expeditions; above all, how she had saved Russia at the campaign of the Pruth.

So the coronation took place with unusual magnificence.

But, only a few months afterwards, what a change was visible in intercourse between the imperial couple!

Peter was enraged at Catherine. Her income was stopped, so that she was forced to borrow the sum of a thousand ducats from her three maids-of-honour, Olsoofiev, Kampesshausen, and Villebois. The said sum was to be bestowed on Peter's favourite servant, Vasili Petrovitch, to make him intercede in her favour. But Peter, with his own hands, tore in pieces the document which decreed Catherine heiress of the throne.

Whence this change?

In 1724 Catherine was thirty-eight years old, but court politeness considered her age only as thirty-five. Certainly, she was no aristocratic beauty. The size of her slippers—still preserved to posterity—occasioned the Countess Choiseul-Gouffier, on seeing them, to remark sarcastically that 'the Empress Catherine was on excellent footing with this lower world!' But notwithstanding the want of refined elegance, nature had bestowed on Catherine a well-grown, healthy, fresh exterior. She had beautiful fair hair. Her blue eyes and her features in general



had a charm peculiar to themselves, but which escaped the painter's art, so that no good portraits of her remain. She was an excellent horsewoman and a good dancer, although latterly she only danced with Peter, who was very fond of dancing when young. She merely walked with others. Catherine's disposition was a strange combination of feminine gentleness and manly daring. Accessible and kind to those around her, she not unfrequently soothed Peter's storms of passion, and did not even dread to stand face to face with him alone.

In 1726, when the English and Danish fleets appeared at Revel, with hostile intentions to Russia, Catherine—then reigning empress—wished herself to take command of the Russian fleet, and to lead it against the enemy. Not long before her death, Catherine, dressed in the uniform of a colonel, was reviewing the guards; and, while the Simeonov regiment was forming into a square, a ball, fired by an unknown hand, passed near her, and killed a rich Russian merchant on the spot. But none remarked that Catherine changed countenance. She continued the review as if nothing had happened. If we add to these qualities her singularly lively temperament, we are not surprised that at thirty-eight she could still please. Peter's excesses, on the contrary, had rendered him prematurely old. We must keep all this in mind, in order to explain the affair between Catherine and Mons de la Croix, gentleman-in-waiting, and which made so much noise during the interval between Catherine's coronation and the death of Peter.

That great sovereign was decidedly one who acted on the maxim, 'Do not do as I do; but do as I bid you.' We have already seen that he himself talked quite openly and joked concerning his love intrigues; but he judged those of Catherine more severely.

Peter's former favourite, Mademoiselle Mons de la Croix, subsequently married General Balk, and then became one of Catherine's ladies-in-waiting. Mme. Balk encouraged the affair between her brother and the empress; and when Peter knew all, his wrath was extreme. He wished to have a public judgment of the case. He himself took food to Mons while the latter was in prison, so that no one else should see him. Baron Osterman and Count P. Tolstoi were, however, so alarmed at the scandal of a public trial, that they actually threw themselves on their knees before Peter, and implored him to alter his resolution, while assuring him at the same time that, if he did not, no prince would marry his daughters. So Peter yielded. Mons and his sister, Mme. Balk, were accused of extortion, for intercession with the empress, and thereby violating the law made in 1714 concerning bribery. But every one knew the real offence.

Once, during a dark autumn afternoon, while the affair of Mons was being

judged, Peter came into his daughters' room while a Frenchwoman was giving them a lesson, shared also by a little girl brought up along with the two princesses. The Frenchwoman told Villebois afterwards that Peter was frightful to behold. His face was deadly pale, and his eyes seemed to burn with fire. He strode about the room, taking long steps, and from time to time casting angry glances at his daughters. Peter usually carried about with him a folding hunting-knife. He took it out, opened and shut it at least twenty times. Meanwhile, all present, one by one, passed into a neighbouring apartment. Only the little French girl, in terror, crept under the table, and thus witnessed the following scene. Peter, in a storm of passion, beat his fist upon the table and walls, threw his hat on the floor, and then rushed out of the room, while he slammed the door with such violence that the hinges were loosened.

At another time, Peter was standing beside Catherine at a window of the palace. 'Seest thou that Venetian glass?' said he to her. 'It is made of simple materials; but, thanks to art, it adorns a palace. I can restore the glass to its former nothingness!' So saying, he smashed it in pieces. Catherine easily understood the allusion; but she did not lose presence of mind.

'You may do so; but is that worthy of you, sire?' answered she. 'And will your palace become more beautiful by a broken glass?'

Peter made no reply. The cool reasoning of Catherine calmed his irritation.

Mons was executed. He, however, was not overwhelmed on hearing of his doom. Before death, he gave his confessor a watch, with Catherine's portrait. Afterwards, under the lining of his coat, was found another portrait of Catherine, set in diamonds. A third portrait he succeeded in giving a confidential individual when arrested. Mons's sister, Madame Balk, was sentenced to receive eleven strokes of the knout, although in reality she received only five. Then she was exiled to Siberia. Peter took Catherine to see the blood-stained head of Mons; for at that epoch the Asiatic custom of exposing the members of those executed still prevailed. Catherine was led so that her dress touched the scaffold; and Peter attentively watched the expression of her face.

Catherine believed in dreams. She liked to tell them to those around her, and to ask their explanation.

Two weeks before the death of Mons, she had a dream which deeply impressed her. She saw that her bed was suddenly covered with serpents, which crept about in different directions. One of the serpents—the largest of all—threw itself on her, began to wind its rings around her and to stifle her. Catherine, however, struggled with the serpent and succeeded in overcoming it. Then all the other smaller serpents quickly disappeared from her bed. She explained the



dream by affirming that a great danger threatened her, but that she would surmount it. And circumstances proved her interpretation correct.

After the execution of Mons, Peter himself also soon passed away. What did Catherine then do? She kept her husband's remains for forty days unburied, during which interval, for half an hour each morning and evening, she wept beside the dead. Villebois remarks that those at court were amazed at the number of Catherine's tears. Two Englishmen, then in Russia, daily visited Peter's remains, and looked on Catherine's excessive weeping as a sort of miracle. Villebois continues, that on witnessing it he was deeply touched, as at the representation of *Andromache*. Peter's body continued so long exposed to view, that, finally, the strong odour of decomposition was perceptible in all the palace. At that time, Natalia Petrovna, youngest daughter of Peter and Catherine, died suddenly of fever, probably occasioned by the foul air.

After Peter's death, Levenvold (gentleman-in-waiting) was in great favour with Catherine for the space of nine months, and subsequently so likewise was young Sapicha. The latter eventually married Catherine's niece, Sophia Karlovna Skovronskaia. She was the only one of that family at Catherine's court. Her brother Karl (Charles) Samoilovitch—Sophia's father—although he received a large estate and was entitled 'gentleman-in-waiting,' had, notwithstanding, neither orders nor rank. During Peter's life, the Skovronskies remained in the country, in their native place, and care was only taken that they should want for nothing. Catherine, on ascending the throne after her husband's death, summoned her relatives to St. Petersburg, although Karl Samoilovitch's wife—a *Lateesh*—cried bitterly and begged that they might be left in their native spot.

Catherine did not long survive Peter. Shortly before her death she had another dream, of which she again gave a true interpretation. She thought she was seated at table surrounded by her courtiers. Suddenly Peter's shade appeared dressed in the ancient Roman toga. Peter beckoned Catherine to approach him. She did so, and he bore her aloft into the clouds. While flying along with him, she cast a glance down on the earth. There she saw her children surrounded by a crowd of persons, belonging to all nations, violently disputing with each other. Catherine's explanation of her dream was that she would soon die, and that after her death anarchy would ensue in the state.

During April 1727, Catherine fell ill. On April 29, her death was anticipated, from constant, violent vomiting. However, sleep, prolonged for five hours, in the arms of her daughter Anna Petrovna, seemed to promise a favourable issue. Then the empress became worse, and after some days she expired (5th May).



Andréev is of opinion that the reports of foreign authors concerning Catherine's death are unfounded; we mean, that she died from slow poison, and that it was administered to her by Menshikov. 'Such statements,' Andréev continues, 'were probably made on account of Menshikov's violent disputes with Bassevitch regarding succession to the throne, combined with the circumstance of the shot fired at Catherine during the review of the guards. Finally, the symptoms of the empress's last illness—*i.e.* constant vomiting—also seemed suspicious. These reports, however, as totally unfounded, deserve only to be mentioned.' (Pp. 26-27.)

Chopin, in his *Histoire de Russie*, is, notwithstanding, of a different opinion. Not only does he give credence to the reports concerning Catherine's death, but he accuses her and Menshikov of shortening Peter's days, after the violent affair of Mons and his sister.

On May 5, 1727, an eventful life drew to a close in the palace of the Russian sovereigns, the life of a simple peasant-woman, born in a Lithuanian hut, yet destined to die as empress of a powerful state! True, there have been many examples of those in humble life attaining greatness. But, for the most part, they were either individuals endued with remarkable gifts, or with powerful will, or they knew how to make use of favourable circumstances, and to push a way forwards.

But Catherine I., on the contrary, was distinguished by no such qualities. She was raised to the throne, thanks to fate, thanks to Peter! Thus it is hardly surprising that, even as autocrat-empress, she still retained some peculiarities of Martha, the prisoner of Marienburg. When elevated to the throne, she refused to learn reading and writing, because her chief study, she said, was to please Peter. She was all her life long under Menshikov's influence. She was not ambitious, and ascended the throne, so to speak, from circumstances, or because Menshikov and Bassevitch wished it. She never forgot what she had been. She was not ashamed of her past life, nor did she repulse those belonging to her. Magnificence and pomp did not dazzle her. She was unaltered by the remembrance of her once poor lot. In fact, she remained the same, whether as an unlettered servant-girl, or the flattered titled occupant of a throne; and that praise can be bestowed only on a few.

To Andréev's fascinating work, *Representatives of Power in Russia after Peter I.* (pp. 1 to 27) we are indebted for the above details of Catherine I.

## CHAPTER XIV

REIGN OF PETER II. (ALEXÉEVITCH), 1727-1730—MENSHIKOV

1727-1730. IMMEDIATELY after Catherine's death, Menshikov brought the young emperor from the palace to his house, and there only allowed his own relatives or trusty individuals to surround the sovereign. Peter then nominated Menshikov generalissimus, and was betrothed to his daughter Maria (Mary) Alexandrovna, although the bridegroom of twelve years old was by no means pleased with his bride of sixteen! In letters to the emperor, Menshikov addressed him as a son, and signed them 'Your father.' Menshikov's next proceedings were to order his own name and those of his children to be inserted in almanacs along with names of the imperial family, and to form a project of uniting his son in marriage to the emperor's sister, the Princess Natalia Alexéevna. But so much restraint had been evident in all these purposed alliances, that Andréev mentions how, on one occasion, the young emperor asked his chief instructor, Osterman, by what law in Russia individuals were forced to marry against their will. Osterman was a ready diplomatist; and as he had then still cause to fear Menshikov, simply replied that, from historical reasons, sovereigns were often obliged to contract a union averse to their inclination. But these 'historical reasons' did not appear clear to the young emperor. It is even recorded (by Andréev) that Peter, on his knees, actually implored his sister Natalia to break off his marriage to Mary Menshikov.

In the youthful sovereign, not a few remarked a germ of the merits and faults of his grandfather Peter I. Peter II. was naturally clever, lively, soon learned what he was taught, and even by physical development was unusually tall and strong for his age. True, after sleepless nights, often spent in driving about the streets with his friend Ivan Alexéevitch Dolgorookov, and constant fatiguing hunting-parties, Peter's sunburnt countenance appeared somewhat thin; yet he seemed several years older than he in reality was. The blue eyes and fair hair of the grandson did not, certainly, resemble the dark complexion of Peter the Great. Notwithstanding, there was a strange similarity in the habits of both. The grandson, like the grandfather, had immense self-love, desired that all should be done as he wished, quietly listened to advice, but eventually took his own way. The peculiarities of Peter II. were that he showed more sympathy with those around him, and was generous even to lavishness. But in a young lad of his age all that was very natural. The celebrated remark of Peter II. in



the senate, that, like Vespasian, he would endeavour that none should quit his presence with a sorrowful countenance, perhaps was suggested to the young prince by the study of history, but it may be also that it was his personal opinion. Unfortunately for himself, he too soon became independent. Those around made him a grown-up man while he was still a child. He might have been an excellent sovereign had he remained till a certain age under wise, active guardianship. But the boy was too early made to stand upon his own feet. The germs of good in his disposition began to be stifled, and evil qualities took root. He grew self-willed, rough in his treatment of those around him, and took pleasure in causing them needless trouble. While Menshikov was still in power, Peter was to a certain degree restrained. His occupations were even regulated by a programme of the upper council. We do not, however, remark that these regulations were followed, even during the time of Menshikov's administration. After his fall, Peter gave up study entirely. But we must not anticipate.

As we have already mentioned, the principal instructor of Peter II. was Osterman. Henry Osterman, the Westphalian, was already transformed into André Ivanovitch Osterman, and had married a Russian, Marfa Ivanovna, born Streshneva, and related to the imperial family by the second consort of Michael Romanov, Eudoxia Looianovna Streshneva.

According to the testimony of Lady Rondeaux's journal (quoted so frequently by Andréev), Osterman had an agreeable exterior. His conversation was attractive and affable, when he did not enact the part of a minister. He was a cunning diplomatist, and had deep knowledge of men.

As for Menshikov, if formerly insupportable by arrogance, he was still more unbearable when invested with full power. His first act then was to take for himself from the treasury the sum of a hundred thousand roubles. He next reduced the sum destined for the maintenance of the imperial court, from seven hundred thousand roubles to a hundred and fifty thousand. His behaviour towards his imperial ward was in no wise that of a devoted subject, but rather that of an all-powerful guardian. This is proved by his treatment of Peter's friend, Ivan Dolgorookov. Menshikov's enemies could do nothing to injure him openly, so they were forced to act in secret. As chief instructor to Peter II., the vice-chancellor Baron Henry Osterman was aided by the steward of the imperial household, Prince Alexei Gregorievitch Dolgorookov. His son Ivan Alexéevitch, a youth of eighteen, had been brought up at the house of his grandfather, the Russian ambassador at Warsaw. Even during Catherine's life, Ivan Dolgorookov, on one occasion, threw himself at the feet of the child-prince Peter, testified devotion to his father's memory, and begged for his confidence. According to



Andréev (p. 46), Ivan Dolgorookov was 'a good fellow,' but flighty, not particularly well educated, and rather empty. He had, however, a kind heart; and his better nature certainly did appear after intercourse with his bride, Natalia Borisovna Sheremeteva. She was a singularly noble-minded woman, who did not abandon her bridegroom even in misfortune—though urged to do so by her relatives—but married him and shared his subsequent exile. She has left an interesting journal which she wrote for her sons, describing what she saw on her way to Siberia. In a subsequent chapter, we shall have occasion to quote some of her remarks.

Peter II. responded to the friendship of Ivan Dolgorookov. Soon the two became inseparable, slept in the same room, and were like brothers.

When Ivan Dolgorookov heard that Peter was to marry Mary Menshikov, he loudly expressed his opinion against the projected union. That was sufficient to make the young man be removed from court, and sent, without any rank, to a regiment; which proves that Menshikov paid little regard to the personal feelings of his ward. But especially regarding pecuniary affairs did Menshikov make himself hateful to the young emperor and to his sister, Natalia Alexéevna. On one occasion, Menshikov learned that an individual in service at court, out of three thousand roubles given to him, had remitted part of the money to the emperor. Menshikov was enraged. He loaded the court official with reproaches, and threatened to deprive him of his office. At another time, Peter asked for five hundred ducats. Menshikov desired to know for what purpose. The young emperor replied that he had need of the money. He received it, and then sent it to his sister. That again irritated Menshikov, and he resolved henceforth to keep strict guard over his ward. But a still more remarkable incident took place regarding a silver service, presented to Peter by the town of Yaroslavl. The emperor gave the service to his sister. Menshikov three times sent to the princess to demand the service again. The third time, Natalia Alexéevna sent away Menshikov's messenger, while saying to him that she remembered Menshikov was not a sovereign, and had no right to act as he did. Finally, there is the well-known anecdote of the nine thousand ducats presented to Peter by the masons of Petersburg. Peter sent them to his sister. Menshikov, meanwhile, met the officer carrying the plate with the money, and ordered it to be taken to his (Menshikov's) own house, and remarked that the emperor was still young, and did not know how to dispose of so large a sum. All these proceedings irritated Peter against Menshikov, and made an enemy of the Princess Natalia; also the latter had, besides, great influence over her brother. Menshikov might surely have remarked the unusually decided disposition of

Peter, and, moreover, that he did not like to be treated as a little child. Accordingly, Menshikov's fall was not unexpected.

During this interval Menshikov became dangerously ill, and his enemies took the opportunity to hasten his fall. When he recovered and began as formerly to administer affairs—not suspecting what had happened—suddenly, on September 6, 1727, the emperor intimated that he would no longer live in Menshikov's house, but in the summer palace. On September 8, the former administrator was subjected to arrest. On September 9, he was deprived of his rank and decorations, and sent, for permanent residence, to Oranienburg (government of Riazane), which town belonged to him. At first he was permitted to retain his property. Oranienburg, however, was but a halting-place. Soon exile to Berezov in Siberia ensued.

When Menshikov's overthrow actually took place, his enemies began to accuse him of what he probably had not even imagined. Among other accusations, it was affirmed that he had formed the following plans:—to borrow ten millions of roubles from the Prussian court—with the aid of that sum, to seize the Russian crown—finally, to repay the Prussians twenty millions of roubles. Others maintained that Menshikov had endeavoured to fill the Preobrajenski regiment with individuals devoted to himself. That report is certainly much more probable. Menshikov and his clever sister-in-law Arsenieva—*i.e.* wife's sister, as the word *Svoiatchenitza* particularly signifies in Russ—were sent to Berezov (government of Tobolsk) in Siberia. The other members of the family voluntarily went there also. Menshikov's wife—Daria Michaelovna—did not long survive her misfortunes. She had shed so many tears, that she became blind, and finally died while on the road to exile. Daria Michaelovna, in despair, had thrown herself at Osterman's feet and embraced his knees, but he remained inflexible. The poor woman was individually pitied, yet nothing could be done for her.

Strange to say, however, Alexander Danilovitch Menshikov showed more philosophy in exile than he had often done while in prosperity. When arrested, fourteen millions of roubles and one hundred and five pounds, weight of gold vessels were taken from him. Notwithstanding, his retreat from St. Petersburg was magnificent. He quitted the city in sumptuous conveyances. They amounted to forty-two carriages, which followed each other in long succession. It was accompanied by a guard, commanded by a captain, and formed of one hundred and twenty guardsmen. An immense crowd brought up the rear. Menshikov's wealth was besides heaped up on carts. He did all to avert the misfortune of exile. He wrote to the emperor in order to justify himself, and implored per-



mission only to live quietly, far removed from government. Menshikov also addressed petitions to the Grand Princess Natalia Alexéevna, in which he entitled her 'Your Majesty'; but all was of no avail. His wealth was taken from him at Tver. There he was placed in a common peasant's cart, and thus he continued his journey.

According to Andréev (p. 42), when Menshikov reached his destination in Siberia he received the sum of ten roubles (£2) a day for his maintenance, which allowed him to live almost in luxury in the prison of Berezov; but he seemed to be again transformed into the simple Alexander Menshikov whom Peter I. had met in early youth. Menshikov allowed his beard to grow, and was to be seen, axe in hand, aiding to build a church he erected at his own cost in the neighbourhood of the prison.

Had his ambition for ever disappeared? We can hardly tell. Not if his enemies are to be believed. They affirmed that anonymous letters in his praise were found at the Kreml, and that they had not been put there without his knowledge. It is also said that Menshikov gave a thousand ducats to the confessor of the Dowager Czarine Evdokia Feodorovna, and a letter to the young emperor, warning him against his new friends and reminding him of former services. But these proceedings only injured the exiled. He was henceforth guarded more strictly, and all who held intercourse with him were condemned to death. However, Menshikov did not long survive his misfortunes. He had acquired a habit of bleeding himself so often, that he finally grew weak. He would not ask medical aid. He spoke little to those around him; and even, it is said, hastened his death by refusing food. He died in 1729.

Soon after reaching Berezov, the former bride of Peter II., Mary Menshikov, died also. In these regions there is a tradition that Prince Feodor Dolgorookov, after taking a foreign passport and secretly reaching Berezov, there married Mary Menshikov. She died at the birth of twins.

In 1825, nearly a hundred years afterwards, her tomb was disturbed. The civil governor of Siberia, Banteesh-Kamenski, wished to discover Menshikov's grave. The remains of Mary Menshikov were found in good preservation, in consequence of thick ice around. But when exposed to the air, during a warm summer day, the body of course decomposed.

Strange to say, in 1827, *i.e.* a year and a half later, Banteesh-Kamenski again ordered the grave to be opened, and in his own presence, so much did he wish to be sure if that was the tomb of Menshikov or not. But decomposition had already advanced so far that the features of the dead could not be recognised.



THE DOLGOROOKOVs

When Menshikov fell, few regretted him. 'The vainglory of the exceedingly proud Goliath has passed and been brought to nought!' wrote one contemporary to another—*i.e.* Pashkov to Tscherkasov. 'That exceedingly proud Goliath ruined by the powerful hand of God! All rejoice at this; and I too, sinful mortal, praise the Trinity that I remain without any fear! All is going on well; and now none have cause to dread, as was perpetually the case while Prince Menshikov was in power.'

Notwithstanding, events soon occurred which caused some to regret Menshikov. Immediately after his fall the emperor declared himself of age, intimated that he would preside at the secret council and participate in administration. But these were merely promises and nothing more. Study was interrupted. Administration of state affairs did not accord with the emperor's years, and soon pleasure became the sole occupation of the young sovereign. The Dolgorookovs obtained influence over Peter. His instructor Osterman was no longer heeded. His admonitions were even considered tiresome. It is narrated that on one occasion Osterman reproached Peter and added that he himself in a few years would be the very first to order Osterman's head to be cut off if he did not openly warn the young sovereign against the abyss towards which he was advancing, and that he, Osterman, would give up his post as instructor. Peter was touched, threw himself on Osterman's neck and implored him not to leave his post. But that very evening the thoughtless young prince renewed his reckless mode of life. Peter had an innate dislike to the sea and ships, but he was passionately fond of hunting and pleasure. Eventually he followed the advice of those who urged him to remove to Moscow along with the court (9th January 1728). The foreigners at court, including Osterman, anticipated that removal with dread, as it seemed to threaten an end of the great work commenced by Peter I. These apprehensions were, however, superfluous. For the individuals who surrounded Peter II., and who for the time had complete sway over him, belonged neither to the party of old nor new Russians, but simply thought of their own private personal advantage. The very same Pashkov, who had so rejoiced at Menshikov's fall, not long afterwards again wrote to his friend Tscherkasov in no cheerful tone. The former expressed himself in the following terms: 'The new time-pleasers have occasioned so much disturbance that all are in danger at court. Each fears another; and firm hope is to be found nowhere!'

Some even began to regret Menshikov. The Dolgorookovs, in fact, followed his example, *i.e.* they allowed no one to have admittance to the young emperor.

The Czarine-Dowager Evdokia Feodorovna—set at liberty when Peter II. ascended the throne, and brought to Moscow—could not have an interview alone with her grandson. Andréev, however, mentions that, as far as the Empress Evdokia was concerned, neither Peter II. nor his sister Natalia had any sympathy with their grandmother. Peter always wished to have a third person present during any visit to her, and Natalia Alexéevna used to take her aunt Elizaveta Petrovna with her when obliged to visit Evdokia. That was probably to avoid discussing state affairs with the old lady, who was said to be ambitious; and as she had not yet lost all traces of former beauty, in spite of excessive stoutness, worldly thoughts still lingered in her mind. During the life of Peter I., Evdokia had been known as the recluse Elena, and while in the monastery had inscribed ‘meat’ as ‘fish.’ But while her grandson occupied the throne, the Dievitché monastery had been transformed for her into an imperial palace.

Here we must not omit to notice more particularly Evdokia’s granddaughter, the young Princess Natalia Alexéevna—Peter’s sister and his good angel! She had the greatest friendship for Osterman. Thus the old statesman and the youthful czarevna formed a kind of alliance, whose object was to preserve Peter from the evil influence of his surroundings. Natalia Alexéevna was only one year older than her brother; but mentally, she was much his senior. She was neither pretty nor even attractive; notwithstanding, she was unusually developed for her age. In intercourse with others she was kind and lively. She was, besides, very fond of reading, and was by no means a child when her brother ascended the throne, Natalia Alexéevna had, moreover, an independent disposition, so that injurious outward influence did not easily do her harm. She at once understood that among all Peter’s courtiers his best friend was Osterman. Hence her friendship for the latter. But alas! all too soon, she was destined to leave this world. Peter sincerely loved his sister. Her influence over him was great. Thus, while it continued, Osterman did not yet lose all hope of bringing his thoughtless young ward back to the right path. The Dolgorookovs also remarked that, and endeavoured to remove Natalia Alexéevna from her brother; for then only could these ambitious nobles hope to execute their plans. The journey to Moscow for the coronation presented an excellent opportunity to the Dolgorookovs. The coronation, however, was postponed, as the Russian merchants sent to Lyons to buy silk stuffs had not yet returned. Both Natalia Alexéevna and Osterman dreaded the journey, though it was unavoidable. Their next efforts were that, at least, it should not be prolonged.

So the court went to Moscow. The fears of Natalia Alexéevna and Osterman were only too well founded. Soon the Dolgorookovs gained complete power over



Peter. They constantly took him to hunt beyond Moscow. The hunting-parties were prolonged for days, and sometimes even for weeks together. After hunting, the young sovereign was entertained at luxurious, noisy feasts, during which his skill in shooting was praised. The number of game he had killed was counted; and then plans for new excursions were formed. State affairs were utterly neglected. In a word, the Dolgorookovs did as they pleased. Alexei Dolgorookov was an empty, insignificant man, who had not much real influence over Peter. Prince Vasili Lookitch Dolgorookov was, however, more dangerous, for he was well educated, cunning, and experienced. He in fact it was who entirely directed the affairs of his other relatives. Prince Vasili next tried to separate Peter from his favourite aunt, Elizaveta Petrovna; for she was also an obstacle to the Dolgorookovs. As for Natalia Alexéevna, she went to the hunting-parties in a different detachment from her brother; but if she did not go to them she could not see him at all. The violent exercise proved too much for her health, and she sickened.

The Dolgorookovs, meanwhile, triumphed. After the coronation the court still remained in Moscow, which meant that the influence of Natalia Alexéevna and Osterman declined.

Natalia Alexéevna felt this keenly. Except her friendship for Osterman she was utterly alone amid the crowd of talkers and flatterers who surrounded her. Her illness was thought to be consumption. It gradually increased until at length it terminated fatally. Five couriers were then sent in haste to inform Peter, who was at a hunt. At length he arrived, shed tears over his dead sister, removed to another palace, and finally all went on as before. Andréev remarks that doubtless the uncomfortable old palace had had an evil effect on the already shattered health of Natalia Alexéevna.

More than all others, Osterman mourned the untimely death of the young princess. He remained at home and received no one, even those he most trusted. After some days all remarked the great loss the old statesman had experienced; for along with Natalia Alexéevna he buried his last hope of Peter's reform. And not without cause did Osterman feel alarm. The great work of Peter I. seemed in danger. The extreme Russian party triumphed; and foreigners had no longer a constant protectress in Natalia Alexéevna. In fact, Osterman felt that the only advantage for Russia was to reconcile the ancient order of things with the reforms introduced by Peter the Great.

With Natalia Alexéevna the good genius of Peter II. had taken flight to another world.

After Natalia's death Peter was entirely in the hands of the Dolgorookovs.



Osterman, always prudent and politic, waved his hand and left full power to these ambitious nobles, while he remained steward of the imperial household and instructor of the young emperor only in name. Peter was also withdrawn from his aunt, Elizaveta Petrovna; and she, thanks to the intrigues of the Dolgorookovs, was often in utter want. When she complained of this to her nephew his answer was: 'That is not my fault. My orders are not obeyed; but I shall find means to break my chains!'

In September, 1729, the emperor left Moscow, accompanied by the Dolgorookovs, and did not return till November. During that period he had been ill, and then he had promised to marry Ekaterina (Catherine) Dolgorookova, daughter of Prince Alexei and sister of Peter's favourite, Ivan Dolgorookov. But that was the last triumph of the family. Peter had evidently become tired of the Dolgorookovs. He seldom saw his bride; and he even again began to be intimate with Osterman. In the family of the Dolgorookovs themselves there was also discord, so that a change was anticipated. It came, but not in the manner expected.

Andréev mentions (p. 30) that several extraordinary projects of marriage had already been formed for Peter II. At one time there had been question of uniting him to his step-aunt, Natalia Petrovna (youngest daughter of Peter the Great), but her early death had frustrated that measure—a measure to which the Empress Catherine was by no means averse, as it seemed to unite the claims of two families to the throne of Russia. Then Osterman had proposed to unite Peter and another step-aunt, Elizaveta Petrovna, although she was several years his senior. She was then seventeen and Peter was only eleven. Osterman, moreover, argued that if the relationship was too near, in early times brothers had married sisters.

At the ceremony of betrothal between Peter II. and Ekaterina Alexéevna Dolgorookova all the members of the imperial family (except the Dowager-Empress Evdokia Feodorovna) were obliged to kiss the hand of the emperor's bride.

According to Andréev, Ekaterina Dolgorookova was a beautiful, but arrogant, malicious young person. She was at open enmity with her brother Ivan; and was even blamed for his subsequent arrest and violent death. We, however, must not anticipate.

On the Epiphany (January 6) Peter went in a sledge, along with his bride, to the ceremony of consecrating the water. In order not to sit beside Catherine Dolgorookova, he stood on a foot-board behind her sledge. Peter still treated her only with distant politeness. She, also, was cold and sad as heretofore. The

courtiers had remarked that at a ball, given on occasion of the betrothal, the emperor remained only a few minutes. Andréev mentions (p. 53) that Catherine Dolgorookova had previously been attached to Melezino, a young secretary of the German embassy. Be that as it may, however, Peter II., on January 6, 1730, was present at the religious ceremony of consecrating the water, and remained in the open air not less than four hours. The frost was keen, and the young emperor was too lightly dressed, so that he caught a chill. The illness soon became serious, and proved to be smallpox. In delirium Peter called for André Ivanovitch (Osterman), and ordered a sledge to go to the Princess Natalia Alexéevna.

Poor youth! An untimely death, like that of his sister, awaited him also.

On January 19—the very day fixed for the young emperor's marriage—a stiffened corpse was all that remained of Peter II.!

During his death agony the Dolgorookovs assembled and forged a testament, by which they endeavoured to prove that the young emperor had chosen a successor in the person of his bride Catherine Dolgorookova. Her brother Ivan is even said to have run through the palace halls shouting: 'Long live the Empress Catherine!' But all that did not succeed.

In a word, the reign of the Dolgorookovs was over. Exile alone awaited them! All avoided them as if they were lepers—all except the singularly noble-minded Natalia Borisovna Sheremeteva, bride of Ivan Dolgorookov, who affirmed that she loved her bridegroom for himself alone, and that she would never forsake him. She accordingly became his wife, and accompanied him to exile. She thus acted in spite of advice given by her relatives, who urged her to abandon him. Natalia Borisovna has left an interesting description of her journey to Siberia. But even there Peter's former favourite, Ivan Dolgorookov, did not escape. He had been imprudent enough to speak disrespectfully of the Empress Anna Ioannovna by calling her 'a Swede,' etc., and also to criticise her favourite, Biron. That was sufficient! In general, the Dolgorookovs were closely watched during exile. They had managed to take along with them some objects of value, which, however, were confiscated. 'The ruined one' (as Peter's former bride was styled in official documents) was likewise asked to deliver up the portrait of her imperial bridegroom; but she avoided doing so. A strict watch was kept over the Dolgorookovs, so much so, that in these regions there was a proverbial expression to the effect that 'those who ate pancakes with the Dolgorookovs were taken to answer for it at Tobolsk!'

We have already mentioned Ivan Dolgorookov's imprudence of speech. His words were reported to the Empress Anna and her all-powerful favourite Biron.



Ivan Dolgorookov was then arrested, taken to Novgorod and there executed, by being broken on the wheel. His brothers and sisters were afterwards sent in captivity to different monasteries.

Andréev states (p. 53) that Catherine Dolgorookova never forgave her brother Ivan for not giving her some objects of value, which had belonged to the Grand Princess Natalia Alexéevna. Catherine accordingly vowed vengeance on Ivan, and instigated a younger brother Alexander to denounce Ivan to government as a dangerous individual. In those days a denunciation ruined both the innocent and the guilty. Alexander Dolgorookov was at last so shocked at the terrible consequences of what he had done, that he tried to kill himself by ripping up his stomach. It, however, was sewed together, and he recovered. According to popular tradition, when, long afterwards, Alexander Dolgorookov returned from exile, and lived in Moscow, the lower orders there surnamed him 'the prince with the ripped-up stomach.'

As for Peter's former bride, the Princess Catherine Dolgorookova, she suffered not a little, like the rest of her family. Doubtless she felt this all the more keenly that she had not been brought up like women in ancient Russia, or in a state of semi-captivity. She and her brother Ivan had both passed their early days at the house of their grandfather, the Russian ambassador at Warsaw, so they were modernised.

It is said that Catherine Dolgorookova was kept as a prisoner in different monasteries. In one (at Bielozersk, government of Novgorod) she was shut up in a separate wooden wing, and the door of her cell was fastened by two locks. The light only penetrated by a small aperture, instead of a window. But soon even that was closed. Andréev also states (p. 64) that in general Catherine Dolgorookova was proud and unbending towards those near her. On one occasion, a nun whom she had offended shook a broom at her. 'Esteem light even in darkness!' haughtily exclaimed Catherine. 'I am a princess, and thou art only a bondwoman!'

An important personage from St. Petersburg once visited the monastery. Catherine did not rise at his entrance, and did not even turn towards him. He accordingly went away uttering threats. Soon the last rays of light were excluded from her cell by the aperture being closed. None were allowed to enter it, save a man who watched her; and two girls were even flogged because they had looked through a chink of the cell.

In 1745 the Empress Elizaveta Petrovna recalled Catherine Dolgorookova from exile, the same person whose hand the subsequent empress had once kissed, as the young emperor's bride. Catherine at length married A. R. Bruce.



Arrogant till the very last, on her death-bed she ordered all her dresses to be burned, so that none might wear them after her.

#### EXTERIOR ADMINISTRATION DURING THE REIGN OF PETER II.

Among acts of exterior administration during the reign of Peter II., the question concerning Courland began to be discussed. There, after the death of Frederick William, consort of the Princess Anna Ioannovna (niece of Peter I.), Frederick's aged, childless uncle Ferdinand administered affairs. The Courlanders wished to proclaim as his successor the famous Maurice of Saxony, natural son of the Polish king, Augustus II. The Poles, however, wished to add Courland to their own country; but Russia frustrated both measures.

In Asia, Count Ragojinski concluded a treaty with China, on the river Boor. It was agreed that both states were freely to carry on trade on the boundaries, at two spots, namely, at the Russian village of Riachta and at the Chinese Mamiam-atchina. Once in three years a Russian caravan was to be sent to Pekin, and there to carry on commerce without paying duty. Russians also obtained a right to maintain there four members of the clergy and six youths to learn the Chinese language.

#### INTERIOR ADMINISTRATION

During the reign of Catherine I., as we already saw, town magistrates were subjected to voevodes; and while Peter II. occupied the throne, even when Menshikov administered affairs, chief magistrates were abolished.

In order to judge merchants of St. Petersburg, three chosen individuals were appointed. Foreign merchants were ordered to judge their affairs at the so-called 'Commercial College.' Under Osterman's presidency was founded what had already been proposed during Catherine's reign, or, in other words, a 'Commission of Commerce.' Government intimated that merchants of a whole town, or separately, might, through the governor and voevode, send to the 'Commission' a representation concerning what might be useful to commerce. The 'Commission' was especially convenient regarding the system of ransoming, and making regulations concerning bills of exchange.

As formerly, measures were taken to prevent peasants from fleeing to Poland, to the Cossacks in the steppes, and also against highway robbery. In the districts of Penza and elsewhere, large gangs of robbers rode about, set fire to the houses of villagers and nobles, tortured and robbed proprietors and peasants. At length, so great were the atrocities committed, that it became necessary to send a regiment of dragoons in order to subdue the offenders.

As regards instruction of the clergy, a ukaze of Peter the Great was confirmed, which ordered all monasteries to send young monks to the Moscow Slavo-Greek and Latin academy. For the rector of that academy had informed the synod that no monks were sent, so that he had only five pupils. Finally, during the reign of Peter II., one barbarous custom was abolished. We allude to that of placing in the interior of St. Petersburg stone pillars, with stakes, on which were stuck the bodies and heads of executed criminals.

#### LITTLE RUSSIA

In Little Russia, during the reign of Peter II., the hetmanship was reinstated. On October 1, 1727, the Rada, or Council of Cossacks, assembled at Gloohov (government of Tscherneegov) by the secret councillor, Naoomov, sent from St. Petersburg, proclaimed a hetman in the person of Apostol, colonel of Mirgorod, an old man, aged sixty-eight. The youngest son of Apostol was sent to St. Petersburg as a hostage. Naoomov remained beside the hetman for advice, and in the capacity of imperial minister. As previously there had been many complaints in the general council, it was decided that three members should be from Great and three from Little Russia, under presidency of the hetman. Those displeased with the judgment of the general council might present a petition to the emperor, at the college for foreign affairs. In order to collect revenue, two officials were appointed, one from Great and one from Little Russia. The inhabitants of Great or Central Russia were allowed to buy land in Little Russia, while Little Russians might likewise do so in Great Russia.

### CHAPTER XV

#### REIGN OF THE EMPRESS ANNA IOANNOVNA, 1730-1740

By the death of Peter II. the male line of the Romanov dynasty became extinct. Two candidates for the vacant throne—in the persons of Elizaveta Petrovna, younger daughter of Peter the Great, and his grandson Peter (Charles Peter Frederick Ulrick), son of Anna Petrovna—were put aside, and preference was shown to the posterity of Ioann Alexéevitch, elder stepbrother of Peter I.

Ioann had left three surviving daughters—Catherine, Anna, and Prascovia. Peter I., from political motives, had united his second niece, Anna Ioannovna, to the duke of Courland; but their married life lasted only a short time—only six weeks (according to Andréev, p. 68). The duke died on the way from St. Petersburg to Courland, and while he accompanied his consort there.



When the dowager-duchess of Courland—Anna Ioannovna—was finally selected as a successful candidate for the throne of Russia, Prince Dmitri Michaelovitch Golitzine proposed to the upper secret council that imperial power should be restricted. The proposal was accepted, and one member of the council, Prince Vasili Lookitch Dolgorookov, went to Anna Ioannovna, then in Mitau, with an offer of the throne, but under condition of limited power. Anna Ioannovna accepted both proposals, and signed a document to that effect. The upper council then summoned an extra assembly of nobles, military, and clergy, to whom it was intimated that the new sovereign had decided to limit her power; and that was made to appear as a voluntary act of Anna herself. Whereupon those present signed a written acquiescence, 'that, if such was the will of her imperial majesty, they were entirely pleased with it.'

Notwithstanding, great agitation and discontent were soon manifested against the members of the upper council on account of their arbitrary act. Accordingly the councillors were forced to admit that, besides themselves, other important personages had likewise a right to pronounce an opinion concerning the new form of government. So the councillors were eventually obliged to promise that in the event of any important state affairs, senators, generals, members of colleges, etc., should also be summoned for decision. Clergy, too, were to be included, if the affairs concerned the church. Among other conditions made by the upper council, one was that the empress should certainly reside in Moscow. The said council included eight members, *i.e.* the chancellor Golovine, two princes Golitzine, four princes Dolgorookov, and the vice-chancellor Osterman. The latter, however, as a foreigner, refused to give his opinion, and then feigned illness, in order to avoid appearing in the council. Meanwhile, during the month of February, the new empress arrived in Moscow. The nobles then began to assemble in groups. Opinions differed; and various projects were formed concerning organisation of government. When Anna Ioannovna reached Moscow the upper councillors and their partisans immediately surrounded her, and strove to keep her apart from all who seemed to them suspicious. But it was difficult to oppose numbers, and powerful antagonists, who acted both secretly and openly. The party of those who favoured absolute power began to hold private intercourse with the empress, although they could with difficulty do so, because closely watched by the councillors. The chief leaders of the former were Princes Tscherkacski and Troobetzkoï, guided by Theophan Prokopovitch and Osterman. One morning (February 25) a large deputation of nobles waited on the empress, and presented a petition to her, that they might be allowed to deliberate on the new form of government proposed by the upper council, which had left their request un-



heeded. The empress consented. The partisans of unlimited power were, however, afraid to lose time, and that very day presented a second petition to her majesty, requesting her to adopt the absolute government of her ancestors. The upper councillors, taken by surprise, dared not oppose the movement, especially when they saw that the guards favoured the deputation. Anna Ioannovna thereupon ordered the first document which she had signed to be brought. She then tore it in pieces. She was crowned as autocratic sovereign in the month of April; and at the beginning of the year 1732 she removed to St. Petersburg.

#### FALL OF THE UPPER COUNCIL

The upper secret council was abolished. The act of endeavouring to introduce limited power in Russia failed. Those who had supported that measure were at first left in peace; but afterwards, under various pretexts, they were exiled or even executed. Princes Vasili Vladimirovitch and Alexei Gregorievitch Dolgorookov, as well as Prince Dmitri Golitzine, died in captivity. Those executed were Princes Vasili Lookitch, and the favourite of Peter II., Ivan Alexéevitch Dolgorookov. We have already mentioned his admirable wife, Natalia Borisovna, born Sheremeteva, who was earnestly persuaded, by her relatives, to abandon her bridegroom when in adversity; but, as we previously remarked, their advice remained unheeded. After her husband's tragic death, she ended her pure, martyr-like life in a cloister.

#### THE GERMAN PARTY—BIRON

During the reign of Anna Ioannovna, the old Russian nobles were forced to retreat before the so-called 'German Party,' whose representatives were Biron, Munnich, Osterman, and Levenvold, a gentleman-in-waiting. In general, while the throne of Russia was occupied by the successors of Peter I., not a few of those educated at his difficult school subsequently administered affairs. These individuals, promoted on account of their talents or services, did not allow the reforms of the great sovereign to die out, and maintained the new form which political administration had assumed in Russia. But gradually these enlightened men, so useful to the state, disappeared, and a totally different class was seen near the throne. That class was formed not of the well educated and gifted, but merely consisted of those pushed forward by court intrigues, and who owed success either to boldness, or even, sometimes, to outward personal qualities. Amongst such persons we especially remark the chief favourite of Anna Ioannovna, Johann Ernest Biron, or Biren, a native of Courland. One condition made with Anna, when she was elected to fill the throne of Russia, was, that she should not

bring Biron along with her; but, notwithstanding, he soon afterwards found his way to Moscow.

Biron had long since desired to enter the Russian service, and even during the reign of Peter I. had endeavoured to procure a post at the court of the Princess Sophia Charlotte, consort of Alexei Petrovitch, but was rejected as a man of low birth.

According to Andréev (p. 69), Biron, Biren, or Büren, was son of a Courland forester. The latter had bought land, but could not pay the full price for it. Andréev, however, thinks that Princess Natalia Dolgorokova, in her journal, exaggerates when she states 'that Biron's ancestors had made shoes for her relations.' The princess's description of the Empress Anna Ioannovna, Andréev likewise does not credit. We allude to the remark that 'Anna was a head taller than all the guardsmen, between whose ranks she entered Moscow.'

Be that as it may, however, Biron certainly could not boast of ancient descent. Hence, the Courland aristocracy rejected his claim to nobility, and thought they had good cause to do so, even when he was already in vogue at the court of the duchess. Johann Ernest had studied at the Königsberg university, but obtained no remarkable education there; and, if we may believe his contemporary Munnich, knew no language save German and the dialect of Courland. Biron with difficulty read a German letter containing French or Latin quotations. There was, however, another reason why Königsberg should leave a remembrance in the mind of young Biron. On one occasion, during a midnight ramble with some of his fellow-students, he quarrelled with the night-watchmen, and killed one of them. For so doing, Biron was sentenced to remain three years in prison. He spent nine months there, and was only then liberated on condition that he would pay a fine of 700 thalers, or return again to prison.

But if Biron had not seriously studied at the university, he there at least had acquired a taste for reading, and, even in Königsberg, commenced to form his subsequently extensive library. On returning to his own country, he occupied the post of tutor in a private family, but not for long. He finally resolved to seek his fortune. His favourite motto was: 'Il faut se pousser au monde.' And with what recommendations did he begin his career? He could be very pleasant when he wished to be so, and would have been good-looking had the disagreeable expression of his eyes not spoiled his features. Vain, proud, cruel at heart, he concealed his evil inclinations by seeming refinement of a man of the world. He had philosophic opinions concerning religion. The Russians, indeed, considered him as an unbeliever, because he read letters while others were going to church. That was especially remarked at the time when his sins began to be noted in



Russia. He was a professed card-player, and did not scruple to cheat his partner. Indeed, the latter sometimes allowed Biron to do so on purpose, in order to gain his favour. Subsequently, when the word of Biron decided the fate alike of the strong and weak, during one game at cards he used to pocket a million of roubles. He was a first-rate judge of horses, which justified the opinion of the Austrian ambassador, Ostein, concerning Biron, namely, 'that he spoke of horses like a wise man, but whenever he began to talk of men, he lied like a horse.' Fiery by nature, when Biron was angry he forgot all his fine manners, and used language which shocked ears already far from being fastidious. His anger, notwithstanding, soon passed, and afterwards he was capable of being persuaded. One good trait in Biron's character was that he did not tell falsehoods; so that when he could not say the truth, he said nothing at all.

Such was the young adventurer who came to St. Petersburg and Moscow, in order to seek his fortune. In these two capitals he, however, had no success, and returned again to Courland. Some time afterwards he gained admission to the court of the dowager-duchess Anna Ioannovna. Bestoogev, chief manager of the duchess's household, who gave him the situation, used subsequently to remark that 'Biron came from Moscow without a coat, and was admitted to the court of Courland without any rank.'

However, the youthful courtier soon managed to worm himself into the duchess's favour; and hence his eventually brilliant career.

All that took place during the reign of Peter the Great. Amongst the number of Courland deputies who came to congratulate Catherine I. on her ascension of the throne, we again remark Biron. That association, however, appeared so degrading to two ancient Courland noblemen, Baron Reizerling and Baron Fittenhoff, that they made a complaint to the empress because Biron had been chosen. Baron Reizerling even gave in his demission. The result was that Catherine did not receive Biron as a deputy. But, in spite of all that, Catherine was not unwilling to consult the courtier of Anna Ioannovna when obliged to buy horses. Catherine even sent Biron to Breslavl for that purpose. (See Andréev's work, above quoted, pp. 69-71.)

The unexpected events which subsequently happened in Moscow soon elevated the ambitious chamber-subaltern, and afterwards gentleman-in-waiting at the court of the duchess of Courland, and transformed him first into a count, and then into a reigning duke!

But in spite of any qualities which might have made Biron occupy a certain position in society, he was, notwithstanding, totally unfitted to fill the highest place after the sovereign, and to administer affairs of state, for he had actually no



capacity as an administrator, and, what was still worse, he viewed Russia only with the eyes of a foreigner. Gifted foreigners, such as Osterman and Munnich, became attached to Russia, as the sphere of their brilliant success. They, in fact, wished to be useful to Russia, because they could be so, and desired to gain renown for their utility. But the low-minded Biron had no such aims. He did not like Russia. He despised the Russians, and only made use of his high position to aggrandise himself as much as possible. With such views and aims, Biron could, of course, occasion great evil in Russia; for he was completely indifferent to the atrocities committed by those in his service, if only they enriched him. His spies were everywhere. They constantly brought threatening denunciations. The latter, in turn, were followed by hideous torture, exile, and execution. Biron meanwhile so surrounded the empress by persons devoted to himself, that the complaints of the people never reached her ears, and she believed that her subjects were happy.

#### THE MISFORTUNES OF BIRON'S TIME

The chief misfortunes of Biron's time were physical, such as famine and pestilential illnesses. In the second place, there were financial requisitions undertaken without compassion, or any regard to circumstances. Moreover, as these means occasioned universal discontent, Biron next endeavoured to maintain his power by severity and denunciations. But these measures only rendered matters still worse, and occasioned new troubles. When Anna Ioannovna ascended the throne, the arrears of state amounted to several millions. Biron thereupon turned all his attention to that point as a means of enriching himself. Notwithstanding the statements of voevodes concerning the extreme poverty of the peasants, the severest measures were enforced in order to obtain payment, and when these measures did not succeed, officers of the guards were sent to keep voevodes and their associates in chains till all was paid. In consequence of such violence the tax-gatherers acted in self-preservation. From peasants all was taken that could be found. Proprietors and starosts were removed to towns, detained there often for whole months, and sometimes died of starvation in crowded prisons. Loud complaints ensued, but informers lurked all around. In fact, since the days of Boris Godoonov, no greater misfortunes had been experienced. This dark epoch was rendered still worse by the execution of imprisoned noblemen—the Dolgorookovs and Golitzines. Several archbishops were deposed. Theophilakt Lopatinski, archbishop of Tver, who had written a work *On the Lutheran and Calvinistic Heresies*, suffered hideous torture, and then was imprisoned in the fort of Petropavlosk. Any priest who forgot to offer

up a special prayer on an imperial birthday or name's-day was deposed, flogged with the knout, and exiled to Siberia.

But the fate of Artemius Volinski, a cabinet minister, was especially remarkable. Even during the reign of Peter the Great, Volinski became known in the diplomatic line. While he was governor of Astrachan and Kazane, he stained his reputation by plundering and cruelty. When Anna ascended the throne he was promoted to be cabinet minister. Volinski was famed for his talents, but was also known as a bad-tempered, insupportable man. Unquiet, vain, arrogant, constantly pushing himself forward, he suffered no equals, and was always ready to use hateful violence towards inferiors, by subjecting them to the barbarous tortures of the Middle Ages. When Volinski became cabinet minister he came into inimical collision with Osterman, and offended Biron, who vowed to ruin him. Volinski presented the empress with a note, in which he painted many courtiers in black colours. Osterman and others were among those included in the description. The note produced an unfavourable impression on Anna Ioannovna, who felt displeased because Volinski had presumed to give her instruction. Besides, Volinski, in a fit of anger, had publicly beaten Trediakovski, a well-known writer and secretary of the academy. Then, when Trediakovski went with complaints to Biron, Volinski forgot decorum so far as to give Trediakovski a second beating in Biron's very apartments. This exasperated Biron to so great a degree, that he implored the empress to deliver up Volinski to judgment. 'Either he or I must give way,' exclaimed Biron, on his knees before Anna Ioannovna. Accordingly, Volinski was delivered up. He was accused of state crimes, underwent hideous torture, and was then executed. So, likewise, were two individuals intimate with him. Others were beaten with the knout, and exiled. Volinski's children were also sent to Siberia. His sons were compelled to become soldiers, without a fixed term for service. His daughters were obliged to take the veil. But, although hated during life, Volinski, after death, acquired the glory of a martyr-patriot, because he had fallen a victim to the cruelty of Biron. Volinski thus lost his life from endeavouring to struggle with the German party. It, indeed, became all the stronger on account of the Russian nobles being disunited. Many of the highest amongst them were not ashamed to humiliate themselves before the arrogant favourite, and with servility sought his good-will. Even the very amusements in vogue at this epoch—such, for example, as the great number of jesters in the houses of the wealthy—still more showed the gloomy character of the period. A famous masquerade and the wedding of Prince Golitzine—one court jester—took place during the unusually severe winter of 1740, and were so organised as to amuse the empress, who then complained of



sadness. In order to appear at the masquerade, many native inhabitants, in their national costumes, were brought from all parts of Russia; and for the newly married pair was erected a house made of ice, with all its furniture of the same material. According to Andréev (p. 77), Prince Golitzine was made a jester because, while abroad, he had dared to embrace the Romish faith. For the occasion of the prince's marriage, very silly, unseemly, would-be congratulatory verses were composed by Trediakovski, known in the history of Russian literature as an unwearied labourer in science, but, notwithstanding, only a sorry composer of rhymes. The part he enacted as court poet, in fact, differed little from that of a jester. It was during the preparations for the said masquerade that the above-mentioned quarrel between Trediakovski and Volinski took place. The latter was manager of the comic festivity. (Ilovaiski, p. 279.)

#### INTERIOR ADMINISTRATION OF GOVERNMENT

During Anna Ioannovna's reign the upper secret council was abolished (March 1730) and a ruling senate was formed, as it had been while Peter I. occupied the throne. But soon, instead of the upper secret council, there appeared the cabinet, whose members were called cabinet ministers. One old evil, from which ancient Russia had so greatly suffered, still continued. We allude to the injustice and oppression exercised by voevodes; so that at the very commencement of Anna's reign, she was obliged to issue an ukaze, by which orders were given that voevodes should be changed every two years. At the end of that time each voevode was commanded to appear in the senate, with an account of his administration. If the voevode proved to be punctual, and if no complaints had been made against him during a year, he was permitted again to be chosen as voevode.

Anna Ioannovna was also forced to complain that the compilation of the code of laws did not advance, although many still testified the injustice of judges. The empress accordingly gave orders that the code should be completed; and, for that purpose, chose suitable individuals from among landholders, the clergy, and merchants.

The law concerning entail was abolished, because it did not seem to suit Russia, where the parents were accustomed to give equal division of property to sons; whereas, when land was entailed on the eldest son, money, corn, and cattle were given to younger sons. They could do little without land, and the eldest son could not cultivate land without money, corn, and cattle.

In 1736 a law was issued concerning the service of landholders. A father who had two, or several, sons, might leave one at home in order to manage the



property. But the latter son was obliged to learn reading and writing, and at least arithmetic, in order that he might be suitable for civil service. The other sons were obliged to become military. Till this period no particular time had been fixed for the service of petty nobles. It accordingly happened that they remained in the army till old age, and when they returned home they were unable to manage their property. Thus it was henceforth decreed that petty landholders should learn from the age of seven till twenty years, then serve twenty-five years, and afterwards, if they wished, they might retire. For illness or wounds, permission was granted to retire before that time. The younger sons of nobles, more suited for civil than military service, were ordered to be distributed among colleges. It was the duty of secretaries to teach these youths the regulations of administration, as well as law, geography, arithmetic, grammar, etc. The younger sons of nobles, who learned at home, were examined at the ages of twelve and sixteen years. Those found deficient in knowledge of religion, as well as in arithmetic and grammar, were sent to be sailors, without a fixed term for service. These precautions and severe measures of government show how little demand for instruction existed among petty nobles.

In 1736 the empress complained that the children of many officers, nobles, and others, did not appear for examination, but concealed themselves in different ways, while some entered the service of noblemen, and then were accused of various crimes: 'For idleness is the root of all evil. And although schools in towns had been opened for those under age, yet the latter, not discerning their own interest, fled from science, and thus ruined themselves.'

On seeing the importance of the guards, Anna Ioannovna augmented their number. To the Preobrajenski and Simeonovski regiments were added those of Izmailov and one of cavalry. At Munnich's suggestion, the empress assigned the same amount of pay to Russian officers and to foreigners. At Munnich's suggestion, also, the cadet corps was founded in St. Petersburg, at first for two hundred pupils and then for three hundred and sixty. That corps was, however, not purely military. From it pupils entered both civil and military service. Those who showed special talent for science might perfect themselves in it by instruction from professors at the academy of sciences. The pupils at the cadet corps had military exercises only once a week, 'in order not to form a hindrance to any other science.'

Ilovaiski (p. 280) remarks that in general, during the reign of Anna Ioannovna, interior administration and the constant continuation of business were superior to those of her predecessors and successors.

In fact, enlightenment gradually began to advance, although its traces were

far from being very visible in all classes of society. True, there existed not a little brilliancy and luxury; but even they only veiled the real rudeness of the times. Witness, for example, the quarrel between Volinski and Trediakovski.

The pitiful part enacted by doctors attached to the army we learn from the notes of Fisher, then chief physician. It is in the following terms that he expresses himself: 'A staff-officer wishes to keep a doctor constantly in his own room, to make him a servant and to ask him to comb a wig. And if the doctor does not appear obliging enough, he is subjected to complaints, fines, and other humiliating proceedings on the part of a staff-officer. But the doctor who consents from fear or bribery to become a man-servant, is not obeyed. He is in fact despised, and does not visit the sick. Such doctors live chiefly in the apartments of staff-officers, while others, offended by staff-officers, refuse to serve.' (Soloviev, p. 294.)

In Little Russia, during the reign of Anna Ioannovna, Apostol quietly continued to be hetman till his death, which took place in 1724. Government did not name his successor: but administration was invested in a so-called 'college' composed of six members, three from Great and three from Little Russia.

Outward administration was directed by Osterman, while Anna Ioannovna occupied the throne. Austria and France in turn sought alliance with Russia. Osterman, however, persuaded the empress to form alliance with Austria as more useful; for the latter country being nearer to Russia, might be more beneficial to it than the distant France. Not only so, Austria might help or hinder Russia in intercourse with Poland and Turkey, while France had less influence in that way.

Towards the east, Russia abandoned the plan of Peter the Great regarding conquests on the shores of the Caspian Sea. Accordingly, at the commencement of 1732, the provinces conquered by Peter were restored to Persia. In fact, their unhealthy climate had rendered them only a burying-ground for the Russians.

During the following year, 1733, Augustus II., king of Poland, died.

Russia and Austria acted in concert and wished his successor to be his son Augustus III., elector of Saxony, who promised the Russian government to act in concert with it concerning Courland, and to endeavour that Poland should renounce claims to Livonia. The opponent of Augustus was his father's old rival, Stanislaw Leschinski, who was at this epoch maintained by France in consequence of his daughter Mary having married the French king Louis xv. Accordingly, Stanislaw was proclaimed king of Poland. But the approach of Russian troops, commanded by Lacey, forced Stanislaw to withdraw from Warsaw



to Dantzig. Profiting by these events, the Saxon party proclaimed Augustus, and Lacey marched forward to besiege Stanislav in Dantzig, but, having few troops, could not act with success. In Russia complaints were made that things went slowly at Dantzig, so Lacey was replaced by Munnich. But even he, with the same means as Lacey had had, could do little. However, when Munnich received reinforcements in form of troops and vessels which brought provisions and artillery, Stanislav fled, and Dantzig surrendered. The siege of that town, prolonged for one hundred and thirty-five days, cost the Russians more than eight thousand men.

But soon Munnich had a more extensive sphere for his brilliant military talent in the war with Turkey, commenced in alliance with Austria, on account of invasions from the Crimea. Lacey conquered Azoph. In 1736 Munnich took Perekop and frightfully devastated all the western part of the peninsula, even to Batchesaria. In 1737 Lacey devastated the eastern part of the Crimea, and Munnich took Otschakov. In 1739 Munnich gained a great victory at Stavootschena, took Hotin, crossed the Pruth, and boasted that that river, once the scene of a shameful treaty, had finally become famous for the Russians. Munnich, in fact, next purposed to advance to the Danube. That brilliant success, however, cost very dear. The marches were difficult. Vast steppes had to be traversed, and Munnich was not remarkable as a general who spared the lives of his soldiers. In order to prove the difficulty of these campaigns in steppes, it is sufficient to add that the troops were obliged to carry about their supplies of wood and water.

Biron meanwhile, without his own will and unintentionally, had contributed to Munnich's fame by urging the empress to nominate him chief commander of the Russian forces in the war with Turkey. For Biron envied and hated Munnich, and wished to remove him from court. Biron's envy and hatred to Munnich had been roused because the empress, on visiting the canal of Ladoga, had praised Munnich's work and honoured him with great confidence.

But while Munnich was obtaining victories over the Turks, Austria was repeatedly unsuccessful, and asked for peace. Besides failure, French gold had influenced Austria to act thus. Austrian ministers were by no means indifferent to such bribery; and began to persuade the Emperor Charles VI. that Russian armies professing the Greek faith were much more dangerous to Austria than Turks, because the most of Austrian subjects in Transylvania, Hungary, Croatia, Dalmatia, and Istria were of the same religion as the Russians. Finally, other European states were alarmed at the prospect of Russia seizing Constantinople and monopolising the trade of the Levant. Thus Austria accepted the mediation of Villeneuve, the French ambassador at Constantinople. The Empress Anna, on



seeing that no aid came from her allies, and on hearing that Persia was about to conclude peace with the Turks, was, moreover, alarmed at the amount of loss the Russian troops had sustained, and disquieted by the discord between commanding officers. For all these reasons, Anna earnestly desired peace, if only the conditions of the shameful treaty at the Pruth were annulled. Peace accordingly was concluded in September 1739. Austria made great concessions to Turkey. Russia, however, gained nothing except a part of the steppes between the Boog and the Dnieper. It was furthermore stipulated that the Turks should raze Azoph to the ground. So terminated a war in which a hundred thousand Russians had perished!

At the same time as Munnich was conquering the Turks, Biron, without any conquest or difficulty, became reigning duke of Courland. In 1737 Ferdinand, the last of the Retlers, died childless. On learning his death, the court of St. Petersburg ordered Russian forces from Riga to enter Courland in order to maintain Biron's election as duke. So Biron was elected by a majority of votes of the Courland nobles, who, formerly, had refused to consider him as one of themselves.

BIRON A REIGNING DUKE—DEATH OF THE EMPRESS ANNA IOANNOVNA,  
OCTOBER 17, 1740

The new duke did not, however, go to Courland. He remained in Russia, where he wished to confirm his power.

The Empress Anna meanwhile desired to confirm the posterity of her father, Ioann Alexéevitch, in the possession of the throne. She therefore married her niece, Princess Anna (formerly Elizabeth) Leopoldovna of Mecklenburg (daughter of Duke Charles Leopold and the Czarevna Ekaterina Ioannovna) to Prince Anthony Ulrick of Brunswick-Luneburg; and when from that union a son Ivan was born, August 24, 1740, he was proclaimed heir to the throne of Russia. At this period the empress became dangerously ill. On October 5 she grew gradually worse. Then Biron used every means to be appointed regent during the minority of the young Prince Ioann (Ivan), and was supported by the cabinet ministers Prince Tscherkasov and Bestoojev-Rumine, as well as Munnich also. But Bestoojev-Rumine was especially urgent for this measure. In a consultation of cabinet ministers and other distinguished individuals, it was decided that no one was more capable of governing the state than Biron. So the empress was petitioned to appoint him regent till Prince Ioann reached the age of seventeen years. The petition was thereupon granted.

On October 17, 1740, the Empress Anna Ioannovna died, aged forty-five, and

all finally swore allegiance to the Emperor Ioann and to the regent duke of Courland.

In Andréev's fascinating work entitled *Representatives of Power in Russia after Peter I.*, from which we have already so frequently quoted, we find the following interesting details, pp. 67-80 :—

'The elder stepbrother of Peter the Great, Ioann Alexéevitch, and his consort Prascovia Feodorovna Soltikova, left three surviving daughters, Catherine, Anna, and Prascovia. During this epoch at court, as we have already mentioned, it was customary to keep a great many jesters. But the dwelling of the Dowager-Czarine Prascovia Feodorovna was literally a refuge for jesters and oddities of all sorts. In that assemblage of idiots, one crazy clerk, Timofei Archipovitch, was esteemed a prophet. He always foretold that Anna Ioannovna would become a nun, and never named her otherwise than Anfeesa. His prediction, however, was not fulfilled; for fate destined to Anna a more remarkable position than her sisters.

'The sphere in which these three princesses were educated did not certainly promise much for their mental culture. And had it not been for their uncle Peter I., their education would probably have been still worse than that they received. He engaged as their teacher Osterman, brother of the subsequently famous André Ivanovitch. The former, according to the testimony of contemporaries, was rather an empty man; although he thought a great deal of himself. However, as a person of European education, he was at least able to communicate some information to his pupils. Among other accomplishments, the young princesses were taught to dance; for at this epoch times had changed, and Peter I. had introduced many customs at court unknown previously, when women were kept in Oriental seclusion.

'The youngest of the sisters, Prascovia Ioannovna, was pale, thin, of delicate health, and not pretty in appearance. She afterwards contracted a morganatic marriage with General Mamonov; and, although she danced by Peter's orders, yet she was somewhat inclined to lead a life of semi-captivity, anciently in vogue for Russian women. But both her sisters, Catherine and Anna, married foreigners, reigning princes. These two princesses seemed more capable of profiting alike by the lessons of Osterman, and also those of a certain dancing-master, Ramburg. He was one known as 'able to give instruction in dancing, elegant movements of the body, and the art of paying compliments both in French and in German.' These arts, however, do not seem to have brought much profit to Stephen Ramburg. He did not receive regular payment for his lessons; and many years afterwards he was forced to petition that the debt might be paid. The fact is



that the family of Ioann Alexéevitch had but a small income. Peter the Great did not assign his relatives much to maintain their imperial rank. Their revenue was, however, subsequently increased; but that was during the reign of Peter II.

'Ekaterina Ioannovna, the eldest of the sisters, was given in marriage to Charles Leopold, duke of Mecklenburg, a man of stern, severe disposition, with whom she spent only a short period in his domains. She left him and returned to Russia along with her little daughter Elizabeth, subsequently named Anna when she changed the Protestant faith, in which she had been baptized, for that of the Russo-Greek. Ekaterine Ioannovna was a woman of short stature, stout, and not bad-looking. She was very simple in intercourse; and was considered more than commonplace in spite of her frequent attempts at wit in conversation, or even perhaps because of them, as the cynical predominated in her rather than the satirical.

'Of the three sisters, Anna was decidedly the most presentable. She was tall, firmly built, yet withal well-made and not bad-looking. Her hair was black, her complexion dark, her eyes deep blue. She had a lively, agreeable disposition. Lady Rondeau speaks of Anna Ioannovna as a kind, accessible person, so unaffected that one could address her as an equal. We, however, also know from Berholtz that she was at the same time capable of making herself esteemed. The latter quality seems to indicate that she was not devoid of mind. Her education certainly could not be very brilliant, even as regarded the exterior. Subsequently, although she lived amongst Germans, she merely learned their language enough to understand it, but did not risk speaking it. Other foreign languages she did not know.'

As we have already seen, Peter I. had united his niece to the duke of Courland from political motives. Russia already occupied the Baltic shores to Courland, and finally the turn to possess that duchy had also come. But Peter preferred to acquire it rather by family alliance than by force of arms. Anna received only a small dowry; and Russian troops were removed from the duchy. Anna's dowry was not yet even paid, when her consort suddenly died after six weeks of married life, and while he was accompanying the duchess on the way from St. Petersburg to Courland. The young widow was pretty well received there, and individuals in service visited her as their duchess. That was perhaps partly from fear of her uncle's troops, and partly also from the memory of her husband. But in general, the widowed life of the duchess began to be very monotonous, so that her only pleasure consisted in occasional visits to St. Petersburg. It is accordingly scarcely surprising that she consented to marry even Maurice of Saxony. Menshikov, who had hoped to become duke of Courland, went there. It was



during that very journey that his enemies thought to overthrow him; and in fact, he was only saved from arrest by the intercession which Bassevitch offered to Catherine. On learning that Menshikov had arrived, Anna went at noon, accompanied only by one maid-servant, to Riga. She halted in that town, and sent to inform Menshikov that she desired to see him. Menshikov came, and then Anna urged him to arrange a marriage between her and Maurice of Saxony, also a candidate for the ducal coronet of Courland. Menshikov was troubled; for Maurice only awaited a similar union in order to triumph over his opponents, and among them was Menshikov. The latter, however, tried to dissuade Anna from this union as unsuited to her, because Maurice was of illegitimate birth. We have, however, seen that Anna wished to change her monotonous life in the capital of Courland, where she was watched by a Russian marshal of the court.

Indeed, it was this monotony which accounted for her paying attention to a man like Biron.

#### THE EMPRESS ANNA IOANNOVNA

Even when Anna Ioannovna became autocratic empress, she notwithstanding still retained much simplicity of life at court. In the morning she attended to business, although in reality it was submitted to Biron's decision. At twelve o'clock she dined along with the family of Biron. Her ordinary attire consisted of a black skirt, a red waist, and a handkerchief tied over her head. She often did handiwork, and while thus engaged conversed with the Birones as equals. Sometimes, too, she played at billiards. She was besides a good shot, and hunting was her favourite pastime. At her court, twice a week there was bear-baiting. Occasionally she played at cards. When she lost she paid her debt in gold. In 1736 an Italian opera appeared in St. Petersburg, and the empress used to visit the opera quite simply dressed. She even sometimes then wore a dressing-gown.

That simplicity in private life presented a marked contrast to the pomp at court receptions, or when Anna Ioannovna appeared in state. On such occasions her carriage was frequently surrounded by forty-eight footmen. That of Biron was followed by twenty-four, while those of other dignitaries had twelve. In fact, it was forbidden to appear twice at court in the same dress. Pounds of gold and silver thread were employed at Lyons in order to prepare stuff for Russian noblemen's garments. Luxury, nay, profuseness, was inculcated. This is supposed to have been the suggestion of Biron, who endeavoured to ruin the Russian nobles, whom he hated and despised. How otherwise can we account for the contradictory tastes shown by Anna Ioannovna? We mean her love of simplicity in private, and her sumptuous attire on state occasions.

Indeed, if we see contradiction between what Anna liked and what she often did, this is only one among many similar examples. Anna Ioannovna was naturally a woman of good heart and very compassionate. She mingled her tears with those of the Dowager-Empress Evdokia, when both met for the coronation in Moscow, which to them caused so many remembrances. Notwithstanding, there is a tradition that Anna Ioannovna, on one occasion, ordered a court cook to be strung up before the palace windows, because he had made Russian pancakes with rancid butter! The said tradition is reported by Snegeerev, and doubtless may be attributed to one of Biron's bitterest enemies. Accordingly, Andréev thinks that it cannot be believed. Yet Anna had a wonderful command of tears, which freely flowed whenever she heard a sad story or a description of cruelty. There is, however, positive proof that her evil surroundings did deteriorate her naturally kind disposition. Biron's little son once ate too many strawberries in the court garden, and consequently had pain in the stomach. True, the tutor had forbidden his pupil to eat too much fruit; but the spoiled child was wayward, and paid no attention to orders. When the empress heard what had happened, what did she do? She ordered Schwartz—the tutor—to sweep the streets dressed as a felon! Even Biron himself was ashamed of this proceeding. He gave Schwartz a thousand roubles and a passport to go abroad. But the bad influence of Anna's surroundings appeared even in her amusements. She had six jesters. Probably she paid tribute to the education she had received at the palace of her mother, Prascovia Feodorovna. At Anna's court, however, those who had no inclination to be jesters were obliged to enact that degrading part. Among such was Prince Golitzine, in joke surnamed Kvasnine. We have already mentioned this nobleman. Prince Volkonski, another of Anna's jesters, had also the duty of attending to her hunting-dogs. The remaining jesters were Apraxine, Balakeerev, Pedrillo, and Kosta. The two last were foreigners. They received an order, created in joke for them, that of St. Benedetta. A smaller order of St. Alexander Nevski was to be worn in the button-hole.

It has been again justly supposed that, in all these proceedings, Biron endeavoured, as much as possible, to degrade ancient Russian families, under pretext of amusing the empress.

Andréev (p. 79) affirms that Anna, at first, was really attached to Biron. She was constantly in his society, and in that of his wife and children. The latter, Anna loved as her own. But that Biron had ever any attachment to Anna is doubtful. His cynical expressions in her presence often shocked her. That says little for his attachment. Each word and act of the empress was



reported to Biron. His spies were all around; and no spy was more useful than his wife in keeping watch over the empress. Madame Biron was a little woman, terribly marked by smallpox, yet not totally disfigured by that deadly foe to beauty, and her neck was of dazzling whiteness. Harsh in her judgment and speech, the arrogant Fräulein Treiden, when married to the imperial favourite, became still prouder. As duchess of Courland, she signed her name merely 'Benigna,' as a royal personage; obtained the right not to stand in the empress's presence, like princesses of royal blood; gave her hand to be kissed as that of a reigning sovereign, and received guests while seated on a sort of throne. Some of Benigna Biron's dresses cost four hundred thousand roubles. One was trimmed with pearls amounting to a hundred thousand roubles. She also wore diamonds valued at two millions of roubles. As for her husband, he did what he liked with the state treasury. He bought an estate worth ten millions of florins, and possessed diamonds amounting to double that sum. When arrested, it is said that in his house were found an immense number of valuable articles and twenty-eight millions of roubles! (Andréev, p. 80.)

But Biron's system of spies evidently wearied Anna Ioannovna, especially towards the close of her life. Then she was heard to say that she only felt quiet when he quitted her bedroom. In fact, Biron had no attachment to Anna, and merely used her as a means to obtain an end, or, in other words, to gratify his ambition. He endeavoured to conceal her last illness and to treat it lightly. When the French ambassador in St. Petersburg, four months previous to Anna's death, intimated to his court that the empress gave no hope of recovery, in Russia, and even at court, thanks to Biron, none knew the real state of affairs. In short, through Anna, Biron had obtained what he sought. When she ascended the throne of Russia, the emperor of Austria raised her chief gentleman-in-waiting to the rank of count of the German empire, and sent him his portrait along with a hundred and twenty-five thousand francs. Some years later, Biron became duke of Courland. Anna's death opened up to him a way to the regency in Russia.

## CHAPTER XVI

REGENCY OF BIRON AND OF ANNA LEOPOLDOVNA—EPHEMERAL REIGN OF IOANN ANTONOVITCH, 1740-1741

ILOVAISKI (eighth edition, p. 314) narrates that when the dying Empress Anna Ioannovna signed the document concerning the regency, Biron was



delighted. The duke thanked the surrounding ministers for their zeal in maintaining the interest of their native country; and, carried away by a fit of eloquence, is said to have uttered his well-known meaningless phrase: 'Sirs, you have acted like Romans!'

A. P. Bestoojev Rumine, more than any one, had endeavoured to procure the regency for Biron, as the latter had nominated him to be cabinet minister in the place of Volinski, after the latter's execution.

Biron's regency, however, lasted only three weeks. The infant-prince, Ioann Antonovitch, was merely the nominal autocrat of Russia; for all power was really vested in the hands of Biron. Even Munnich, who had aided in procuring the regency for the duke of Courland, had done so with the hope of being nominated generalissimus of the troops. But Biron, as a thoroughly ambitious man, could support none equal to himself, and, besides, dreaded to increase Munnich's power. Accordingly, his desire was not granted. Whereupon Munnich began to think of overthrowing the Biron, as one to whom all submitted with fear and trembling. Munnich then offered his services to the emperor's mother, Anna Leopoldovna, and received her consent to carry out his plan. During one night, accompanied by eighty grenadiers, Munnich went to the summer palace, and there arrested the duke. He and his family were then sent in exile to Siberia, to the town of Peleem. Munnich himself had even drawn the plan of a house, destined to be occupied there by Biron. A new regent was next proclaimed, in the person of the Princess Anna Leopoldovna.

But even the overthrow of Biron did not tranquillise Russia, and only occasioned another more decided change. Anna Leopoldovna was totally unfitted for administration. She passed whole days shut up in her own apartments, in the society of her inseparable favourite, Julianna Mengden. Thus all business was entirely enacted by the prime minister Munnich. The princess-regent, however, had a husband, Prince Anthony. The latter in no wise wished to cede the first place to Munnich. The prince himself was, meanwhile, little suited for independent action; but he was guided by Munnich's rival, Osterman.

Osterman and Prince Anthony thereupon began to alarm the princess-regent, and to tell her that Munnich was a dangerous individual, who never hesitated to accomplish his aims, no matter what sacrifice they cost. To terrify Anna Leopoldovna was not difficult. Ilovaiski (eighth edition, p. 314) also states that she was prejudiced against Munnich by Count Linar, ambassador of Saxony at the court of Russia. Munnich, meanwhile, seeing that his enemies were supplanting him, gave in his demission, expecting, however, that it would not be accepted. It was so, notwithstanding (March 1741). Munnich thereupon retired to private life.

Thus Osterman became all-powerful, but not for a lengthened period. He did not foresee the storm gathering above his own head. Discord also soon began between Anna Leopoldovna and her husband, so that the court was divided into two parties; while among the people complaints were everywhere heard that, even after Biron's overthrow, things were no better.

At this epoch, in western Europe, war was about to break out concerning the inheritance of Austrian possessions. Frederick II. of Prussia took up arms against Maria Theresa, and desired to form alliance with Russia. Accordingly, guided by policy and knowledge of human nature, Frederick flattered Munnich. Although himself experienced in military art, Frederick consulted Munnich concerning it, and urged him to take the part of Prussia. By Munnich's efforts, the former alliance between Russia and Prussia was renewed. Osterman, on the other hand, favoured Austria and the alliance with Poland and Saxony. He, besides, urged the princess-regent to adopt his plan, and to abandon alliance with Prussia. Grieved at these proceedings, Munnich resolved to retire from administration.

During this interval, the Swedes commenced hostilities against Russia, with the desire to regain all lost by the peace of Neustadt, including even St. Petersburg. Another pretext for war also was, that the Russians had excluded Elizaveta Petrovna and the dynasty of Holstein from the throne. For the mother of Anna Petrovna's consort—duke of Holstein—was a Swedish princess, Sophia Hedwige, sister of Charles XII. of Sweden. But soon the efforts of the Swedes to obtain lost possessions proved vain. Field-marshal Lacey routed them completely at Vilmanstrand. With this glorious event, the brief reign of Ioann Antonovitch came to a close.

Another important change was at hand.

After the horrors of Biron's administration, the mild sway of Anna Leopoldovna might have proved a boon to the Russians. However, not a few were discontented that the throne was occupied by a prince, son of a foreigner, while the daughter of Peter the Great, Elizaveta Petrovna, still lived.

The fate of that princess was indeed remarkable. During the life of her august father, the duke of Holstein wished to marry her, as she pleased him more than her elder sister, Anna Petrovna. Soon the French proposed to unite Elizaveta to their young king, Louis xv. According to the testament of Catherine I., Elizaveta was destined as the consort of a prince of Holstein, bishop of Lübeck. We have already seen that Osterman purposed to unite her in marriage to her nephew, Peter II. Then, during his reign, there was a project of marrying her to Charles, margrave of Prussia.



A prince of Wolfenbüttel was also among other pretenders to her hand. Biron, at one time, thought of uniting her to his own son, and then to raise both to the throne. During the regency of Anna Leopoldovna, the Persian shah, Tachmas Kooli Khan, sought the hand of Elizaveta Petrovna. Biron's brother Charles was likewise another of her admirers; but none of these matrimonial proposals succeeded.

The sudden change of government, to which we have alluded above, could only be effected in the name of one person—that is to say, Elizaveta Petrovna, daughter of Peter the Great.

During the reign of Anna Ioannovna, Elizaveta had purposely kept aloof from all political intrigues, and had led a retired life. But even that did not prevent her from being an object of jealousy and suspicion, on account of her birth and claims to the throne.

We have already mentioned that Elizaveta's partisans were numerous, because around her was concentrated a sort of national movement. But, at the same time, among the highest Russian dignitaries, there was not one energetic enough to act in her name. In fact, the chief actors in the conspiracy which placed Elizaveta Petrovna upon the throne were two Frenchmen—Chétardie, the French ambassador in Petersburg, and Lestocq, a French doctor at court.

Chopin, in his *Histoire de Russie*, states that on one occasion Lestocq showed Elizaveta two sketches of herself which he had made. One represented her in regal robes, with a crown on her head and a sceptre in her hand. The second sketch showed Elizaveta covered with a monastic veil, and surrounded by instruments of torture. Lestocq thereupon addressed her thus:—‘Choisissez, madame, ou d'être impératrice, ou d'être enfermée dans un couvent, et de voir vos fidèles serviteurs livrés aux bourreaux!’

On this occasion, so important a change of government could not be effected by civilians. It was necessary that it should be accomplished by armed force. But, we repeat again, there was no one to take the part of commander. Elizaveta Petrovna was accordingly obliged to do so herself—to do what Munnich had done for Anna Leopoldovna. But it can easily be understood that Elizaveta hesitated before she did so. However, there was no time for hesitation. Many knew of her intercourse with Chétardie, and that he was urging her to lay claim to the throne. Elizaveta was thus surrounded by terrible danger. Meanwhile, the guards, faithful to her, had received orders to march to Finland against the Swedes. During the night of November 25, 1741, seven of the Preobrajenski guards appeared before Elizaveta Petrovna, and thus addressed her:—‘Little



Mother! to-morrow, we must begin a campaign and set out on our march. Meanwhile, thou wilt remain in the hands of thy worst enemies! It is impossible to wait another minute!’ So there was no alternative. Elizaveta Petrovna conducted the soldiers to the palace, where Anna Leopoldovna and her family were arrested. During the same night, Munnich, Osterman, and Golovkine were also arrested.

Elizaveta Petrovna, without any opposition, was proclaimed empress. At first she wished to send Anna Leopoldovna and her family abroad, but subsequently this resolution was changed. The former emperor, Ioann Antonovitch, was shut up in the fort of Schlüsselburg. Anna, her husband, and their other children, were sent in exile to Holmogori (government of Archangel), where Anna died in 1746. Her husband died in 1774. Ioann perished, assassinated in Schlüsselburg, in 1764 (5th July). (Soloviev, pp. 298-299.)

According to Ilovaiski (p. 282), Elizaveta Petrovna went at night to the barracks of the Preobrajenski regiment, and addressed the soldiers. Three hundred of them then immediately followed her.

A committee was thereupon formed to judge Munnich, Osterman, Golovkine, Levenvold, and other partisans of the former government. They were condemned to death; but the empress changed the sentence to exile. Osterman was exiled to Berezov, where he died. Munnich was sent to Peleem. Biron was recalled from banishment, and allowed to live at Yaroslavl. Munnich, in Peleem, for twenty years occupied the very house hitherto inhabited by Biron. It had been on purpose built for him, from a plan drawn by Munnich. The exiled Dolgorookovs who still survived were permitted to return to Petersburg. (Soloviev, p. 299.)

During this interval, Munnich did not waste time in useless regret while exiled. He founded an institution at Peleem, and there taught young men. Thus the same hand that formerly had waged war against the Turks, afterwards traced geometrical lines and figures. Munnich finally once more appeared in St. Petersburg, as a venerable man of eighty years old.

## CHAPTER XVII

### ANNA LEOPOLDOVNA

IN Andréev's fascinating work, from which we have already so often quoted, we find some interesting details of Anna Leopoldovna. Among others are the following (pp. 81-85):—

'The Empress Anna Ioannovna died of the same illness—the stone—which shortened the lives of both her sisters.

'We have already seen that Anna Ioannovna adopted her niece Anna (formerly Elizabeth) Leopoldovna, while her mother, Ekaterina Ioannovna, did not live with them in the palace, but had a separate dwelling in another house. As much attention was paid to the posterity of the young princess as to herself, thus there was soon question of her marriage. Accordingly a German prince, Anthony Ulrick of Brunswick-Luneburg, was brought to St. Petersburg to be educated along with Anna Leopoldovna. It was hoped that constant intercourse during early years would occasion attachment between them. But this hope was not realised; for, at the very first glance, Anna disliked her bridegroom. The young princess was a sullen, reserved, obstinate, capricious child. When reproved for these faults, she merely replied that probably she had inherited them from her parents, who were also like her. When Anna Leopoldovna first saw Prince Anthony, he was a boy of fourteen years old, short of stature, effeminate in appearance. He stammered, was quiet and simple, with very limited capacities. In a word, the bride and bridegroom were totally unsuited. Biron soon perceived that; and then it was that he conceived the idea of uniting Anna to his own son. But the plan was frustrated by the obstinacy of the princess. The scythe had hit a stone.'

When Lady Rondeau<sup>1</sup> (whose notes are quoted by Andréev) saw Anna as a little girl, she did not promise much. She had not an attractive personal appearance, while, at the same time, she was serious and even sulky. When older, Anna became still more reserved, spoke little, and never laughed. She was harsh in expression, and could not support subordination. All who knew her felt sure she disliked Prince Anthony, simply because he was her destined bridegroom. When Biron was all-powerful, Anna also hated him, because he exacted submission from every one. Accordingly, whenever she understood what his plans concerning herself in reality were, she consented to marry Anthony Ulrick, who at least had a gentle disposition, while Peter Biron, on the contrary, was said to be even more malicious than his father. True, the latter was hasty; but after a time his anger passed. The son, however, was not soon appeased. Certainly the education of Biron's children had not tended to improve them. We have already mentioned how incensed the Empress Anna Ioannovna was at Schwartz, tutor of the young Biron, when one of them had eaten too many strawberries, and how she punished the tutor for what she considered as his negligence. A similar punishment was also inflicted on Kirsh,

<sup>1</sup> Wife of the British ambassador in St. Petersburg.



Biron's house-steward, simply because, on one occasion, he had dared to complain of the duke's children. They, indeed, allowed themselves all sorts of liberties, such, for example, as pouring wine on passers-by, beating (with rods) the feet and legs of attendants at court. Levenvold used then to spring up, so that the strokes of the rods might not fall on his silk stockings; but others were less accommodating. And, if any one complained to the duke of his children, he replied: 'What is the matter? Are you tired of service? If so, you may retire.'

Peter Biron was then fifteen and the Princess Anna was twenty. No wonder that she was terrified at the prospect of such a bridegroom, and at once repulsed him! Thus she consented, as we have already said, to marry Prince Anthony. He was then a youth of twenty, fair, with wavy locks. When, clad in a light silk jacket, embroidered with gold, he went to thank the empress for the hand of her niece, and for obtaining the consent of the latter, Anna Leopoldovna felt that she had no cause for thankfulness. She therefore gave full vent to her sadness. 'That has all been done by you—cursed ministers!' exclaimed she, addressing Volinski, and no longer able to restrain her indignation.

Although the Princess Anna had been brought as a child to Russia, and educated there, she was, notwithstanding, by no means Russian. That, however, is easily explained by the fact that while the Empress Anna Ioannovna occupied the throne, the court was full of Germans, and Anna Leopoldovna had lived exclusively amongst them. So she was half a foreigner. She had, besides, not even tact and good taste enough to conceal her contempt and dislike of Russians. That explains why, on one occasion, after the empress's death, the Princess Anna, on not finding Apraxine—a gentleman-in-waiting—at his post, and on hearing that he was sleeping, called him 'one of that Russian rabble!' Indeed, contempt towards all Russians was a remarkable feature of Biron's school, at which Anna Leopoldovna had been educated. Anna, however, in her heart, hated Biron also.

When Anna Leopoldovna became mother of the future Emperor Ioann Antonovitch, she saw with indifference how Biron, by means of thirty thousand roubles given to Bestoojev, and by other means also, supplanted her in obtaining the regency, and himself became regent. For, although Anna was harsh and irritable, she, notwithstanding, had no real strength of character, and was unfitted for administration.

In personal appearance Anna Leopoldovna was of middle height. She had a full countenance. Her hair was dark and her eyes black. There was nothing particularly attractive in her exterior; and certainly it was in no wise improved by art. For the princess did not like to dress according to the fashion of the



times, but she chose fashions of her own. It was then customary for ladies to wear hoops; but Anna, even when regent, wore quite plain dresses, and used to put a simple handkerchief on her head when she went to church. During the life of the Empress Anna Ioannovna, the princess detested court receptions, because at them it was necessary to be elegant, and especially because it was also necessary to bow down before the hated Biron. Plain in attire, the princess was also plain in speech and in intercourse. She only seemed at home in a small circle of those around her, particularly foreigners, among whom she had grown up. But court society did not suit her. She liked frankness and hated dissimulation. Far from possessing much worldly affability, she was sometimes even harsh in speech. She used to judge others by their countenances, and by the impression they produced upon her. She herself was so open in intercourse, that she could not conceal her sympathy or antipathy.

Anna Leopoldovna was, however, a woman neither without mind nor heart. She liked to read French and German books, particularly dramas, passages from which she herself used to declaim. She preferred scenes in which an oppressed princess sympathised with those in a similar position. From a love of the drama to romance, there is but a step; and the life of Anna Leopoldovna did not pass without a romance. When she was only sixteen, her attention was attracted by the singularly beautiful appearance of the young Count Linar, ambassador of Saxony at the court of Russia. Interviews between Anna and Linar were arranged by Aderkas, Anna's governess. Linar endeavoured to break off Anna's purposed marriage to Prince Anthony. Probably that was done at her request. But Prince Anthony was protected by the empress. When she knew what was going on, request was made that Linar should be recalled. As for the governess Aderkas, she was sent back to Germany.

The eldest son of Anna Leopoldovna and Prince Anthony was named Ioann.

The Empress Anna Ioannovna was a pious woman. She ordered a thanksgiving for the birth of the young prince to be offered up in all churches of the empire. The imperial infant was then entirely under her care; and she was his only sponsor at his baptism. He could only be dressed and undressed in presence of Benigna Biron. Soon it appeared that the little prince was weak and sickly. We must merely hope that his delicate health was not increased by the fond care of Madame Benigna! As for the Princess Anna Leopoldovna, it seemed quite natural that she should be completely estranged from her son; and no one saw any violation of maternal feeling in that act. Princess Anna, however, tolerated the separation only during the life of her aunt.

## CHAPTER XVIII

## BIRON REGENT—REGENCY OF ANNA LEOPOLDOVNA

THE Empress Anna Ioannovna had newly expired. The court was full of mourners. Anna Leopoldovna sat weeping in a corner of the room where the dead empress lay. Biron also shed tears, and moved about from one spot to another, without knowing what to do. But after a short interval, when all began to be quiet, preparations were made for reading the testament of the deceased sovereign. On seeing Prince Anthony standing behind Princess Anna's chair, Biron approached, and with his usual irony remarked that 'perhaps his royal highness also would be pleased to hear the empress's last will.' All listened attentively to it, although not a few present remembered how the Dolgorookovs had tried to prove that Peter II. had made a testament, forgetting that the young emperor, till he lost consciousness, had fully hoped to recover, and afterwards he was unable to make any arrangement. Anna Ioannovna, too, was unprepared for death. She dreaded to mention it in conversation. Thus the said testament might only be an imposition of Biron himself. Notwithstanding, Biron was proclaimed regent during the minority of the Emperor Ioann Antonovitch. Soon afterwards, the senate conferred on Biron the title of 'royal highness.' He had thus attained the most exalted position which could be occupied by a subject. To the regent was assigned an annual income of five hundred thousand roubles, while Prince Anthony—the emperor's father—was to receive three hundred thousand. The Austrian government, at the commencement of Anna Ioannovna's reign, had brought luck to Biron, by buying him presents to the amount of 200,000 thalers: and as he also had large sums placed in foreign banks, he had an annual income of four millions of pounds, besides what the senate assigned him. He accordingly had ample means to bribe and buy the services of those around him, as well as to maintain the pomp of his court. All turned towards the newly rising sun: and those who formerly had kissed the hand of Prince Anthony, now deemed it necessary to show the same servile attention to Biron. In a word, the spoiled favourite of fortune, who in 1715 was nearly sent out of St. Petersburg because he had dared to solicit the post of gentleman-in-waiting at the court of Sophia Charlotte, consort of Alexei Petrovitch, now had his hand kissed by the most distinguished Russians.

But the medal had also another side. Biron felt insecure because his chief prop—the Empress Anna Ioannovna—was no more. He had been constantly



in her society, and thus had had the opportunity to acquire knowledge concerning the duties of a sovereign. Certainly, he had also abundant leisure to do so. For while Anna found amusement in looking at her six jesters, placed in a row near the wall, and forced to beat each other without mercy, Biron could hardly be amused by such proceedings.

During the ten years of Anna Ioannovna's reign, Biron had made himself cordially detested by the Russians, and he in turn also hated and despised them. Hence his dread of the future.

As we have already seen, the Princess Anna Leopoldovna tolerated separation from her son only during the life of her aunt. Thus the infant emperor remained beside his mother. But a strange report was spread, that they were to be separated, and that Biron intended to send her and her husband away from Russia. Anna was terrified, disclosed her fears to Munnich, and begged his protection. Meanwhile, Munnich only awaited the princess's consent in order to act against Biron.

At two o'clock in the morning, near the palace where Biron lived, and where still lay the empress's remains, a detachment of soldiers, along with Munnich's adjutant, Manstein, and accompanied by Munnich himself, appeared. They surrounded the palace. Munnich then intimated that the emperor's mother had ordered the regent to be arrested. Biron was so universally hated that little persuasion was necessary to make the guards admit the soldiers to the palace. Thus there was no alarm. Manstein, followed by some men, without noise, easily made way to the regent's bedroom. The door, however, was shut. Manstein then broke it open. Biron and his wife awoke in terror, and at once understood what had happened. Benigna Biron began to scream on seeing the stately form of Manstein near the bed. Biron himself seemed ready to hide under it, but Manstein seized him immediately. A struggle then ensued. One soldier had his hand bitten by the regent while endeavouring to stuff a handkerchief into his mouth. But resistance only rendered the assailants cruel, and they dealt Biron at least twenty wounds, although they were small. His hands were finally tied by an officer's scarf, and as he lay, in under-linen, he was carried out of the palace, whereupon a soldier's overcoat was thrown over him; he was then put into a sledge and transported. Benigna, in night-dress, rushed after her husband into the street. There a soldier seized her and took her to Manstein, but he ordered her to be taken back to the palace. The soldier, however, would not take the trouble to do so. He simply threw her on a heap of snow, and went away. An officer who chanced to see her there recognised her, and accompanied her back to the palace, whence she was



removed on that very day, first to the Alexandrovski monastery and then to Schlüsselburg.

During the morning, Biron was also sent to Schlüsselburg. In the same conveyance which removed him were seated two officers with loaded pistols. Biron wore a dressing-gown, and above it a mantle lined with ermine, which he usually had on while riding about the town. He pulled his hat low over his face; yet the people recognised him, and demanded that he should uncover his features, and show them to view.

Immediately after the regent's arrest, all dignitaries were ordered to appear at the palace. Osterman knew nothing of what was going on, and when he received orders from the Princess Anna—then regent—he, as usual, feigned illness in order to avoid appearing. However, when Munnich explained what had taken place, Osterman was quickly cured, and came to congratulate Anna Leopoldovna.

Biron had not miscalculated his aim when he was instrumental in recalling Count Linar, ambassador of Saxony to the court of Russia. Anna soon again began to feel his influence. In fact, that was one reason why discord speedily broke out between her and her husband, Prince Anthony. As for Linar, he hoped to enact the same part as Biron had done during the reign of Anna Ioannovna (Andréev, p. 108).

But the regency of Anna Leopoldovna was of short duration. 'Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown.' And so the princess was doomed to experience. Andréev states that she and her husband were in a continual state of terror. They daily changed their bedroom, in order that none might know where they slept. Soon afterwards another conspiracy placed Elizaveta Petrovna on the throne of Russia (see Andréev, pp. 88-106).

A detachment of the Preobrajenski regiment proclaimed Elizaveta Petrovna their mother-empress, and accompanied her to the regent's palace. The sentinels on guard were about to sound the alarm, but Lestov ripped up the drums with a knife, so there was no noise. Meanwhile the Preobrajenski were already at the palace. All therein were plunged in repose. Elizaveta herself awoke the guards. The soldiers with her were ready to use violence, but Elizaveta distinctly said that if they shed blood she would not go with them. The soldiers then became quiet, and the arrest took place without disturbance, simply as if they had performed an ordinary duty. The princess-regent awoke. Elizaveta was before her. Indeed, it was Elizaveta who awoke Anna. In an instant all was understood. No complaints, no reproaches, were uttered. Anna Leopoldovna then dressed, and she was led out of the palace. The infant emperor was asleep.

Whereupon a number of guards, with noise, surrounded his cradle. On seeing so many strangers, he began to cry. Elizaveta was sorry for the child, and caressed him. He was then taken out of the palace, after his mother. Amid the confusion, Anna Leopoldovna's little daughter Catherine was let fall, and in consequence remained deaf and dumb for her whole life afterwards (see *Andréev*, p. 116).

## CHAPTER XIX

### REIGN OF ELIZAVETA PETROVNA, 1741-1761—THE BODYGUARD—MOVEMENT AGAINST FOREIGNERS

AFTER punishing the adherents of the former government, the new empress generously rewarded those who had aided her to ascend the throne. The Preobrajenski regiment, which had taken so prominent a part in the transaction, received the special designation of 'Life Bodyguard,' and Elizaveta nominated herself its captain. The under officers and common soldiers were promoted to the rank of hereditary nobles, and besides obtained landed property, so that each soldier possessed twenty-nine serfs. As for Lestocq, he acquired the rank of actual secret councillor, received handsome presents and a pension of seven thousand roubles. Schwartz, a music-teacher, who had also participated in the conspiracy, was made a colonel (*Andréev*, p. 117).

It is somewhat remarkable that the French ambassador, Chétardie, who took the chief part in the conspiracy, was by no means prepared for its success. He was even amazed when he learned what had occurred. Meanwhile Chétardie was playing a very advantageous game. In order to aid the undertaking he advanced the sum of forty-nine thousand ducats, and eventually received from Elizaveta money and presents to the amount of one million five hundred thousand pounds. It is supposed that Chétardie favoured Elizaveta Petrovna, not merely from political motives, but also because he was personally influenced by her extreme beauty. Frederick II. of Prussia was of that opinion regarding Chétardie; and, in general, we infer that romantic sentiments had not a little aided the above-mentioned drama.

Thus Elizaveta Petrovna occupied the throne. Bonfires blazed all around. The soldiers guarded their 'mother-empress.' Noise and drinking-matches prevailed in barracks and in all the city. But at length the loud demonstrations ceased. Peter's daughter, a woman naturally without ambition, who would have continued so had she been left in peace, began to reign.



During this interval a powerful movement against foreigners and foreign officers became manifest. This was especially the case in the war between Russia and Sweden, while the Russian troops were in Finland. Munnich's former adjutant, Manstein, then in the Russian service, narrates the following circumstance in his notes (Ilovaiski, p. 285):—

‘While the army was before Viborg, two Swedes came to the camp of the Russians with letters to the commander-in-chief. The soldiers of the Preobrajenski and Simeonovski regiments thereupon spread a report that foreign officers were holding intercourse with the enemy, and wished to betray the Russians. On hearing this, several hundred rebels assembled and resolved to destroy all foreigners. But at that critical moment General Keith rushed into the crowd, seized one of the ringleaders, and ordered a priest to prepare him for death. In terror the rebels dispersed, and those most guilty were punished.’

#### SUCCESSOR TO THE THRONE—CHIEF PERSONAGES DURING THE REIGN OF ELIZAVETA PETROVNA

After excluding the posterity of Ioann Alexéevitch from the throne, Elizaveta Petrovna hastened to confirm the succession on the dynasty of Peter the Great. She accordingly adopted her nephew, Charles Peter Frederick Ulrick, duke of Holstein, her sister Anna Petrovna's son, then fourteen years old. He came to Russia, and on embracing the Russo-Greek faith was henceforth known as Peter Feodorovitch. In November 1742 he was declared heir to the throne of Russia, six months after Elizaveta's coronation, which took place in Moscow, April 28 of the same year. In 1744 a bride for the hereditary grand duke came to Russia in the person of the Princess Sophia Augusta Frederica Dorothea of Anhalt-Zerbst.

The princess was born at Stettin, in Prussian Pomerania, April 21, 1729. Her father, a general in the Prussian service, was governor of Stettin. Subsequently, after a cousin's death, he became reigning prince, and removed to his small domains. Zerbst, or more correctly Serbsk, is situated on the Elbe, at that time on the boundary of Prussia and Saxony. The young princess's mother was of the Holstein family, so that the bride was a distant relative of her future consort, Peter Feodorovitch. Frederick II. of Prussia, more than any other, principally desired the marriage, as he thus hoped to become closely allied to Russia. The young princess arrived there at the age of fifteen, accompanied by her mother, Ioanna Elizabeth. During the following year the bride embraced the Russo-Greek faith, and was henceforth known as Ekaterina Alexéevna. She married Peter in 1745. Catherine's father, duke of Anhalt-Zerbst, was named Christian Augustus.



Among the chief personages at the court of Elizaveta Petrovna, we first of all remark Count Alexei Gregorievitch Razoomovski. He belonged to a family of Little Russian Cossacks. His singularly beautiful voice first attracted Elizaveta Petrovna's attention, and, thanks to her favour, Razoomovski, from being merely a court chorister, was afterwards promoted to a field-marshal, and then received the rank of count. He was a man without remarkable gifts, and had not received much education. But, at all events, he was good and upright. Besides he did not abuse the power which he possessed at court, and had sense enough not to meddle with what he felt beyond his capacity.

The Counts Shoovalov had much more sway in administration during Elizaveta's reign than Razoomovski.

Count Peter Ivanovitch Shoovalov was a highly gifted man, but his morals were light, and he was remarkable not only for great dissimulation, but also because he changed his opinions according to circumstances. Not only so, he diminished his useful services and stained his reputation by avidity. His relative, Ivan Ivanovitch Shoovalov, was of a totally different stamp. He was amongst the best individuals of his time. He, in fact, was the chief representative of higher inspirations and a better order of things. From the commencement of reform, introduced by Peter I., till this epoch, civilisation, arts, and sciences had merely been considered from a material point of view, or as means by which the state might be rendered more powerful, and which ensured more comfort to its inhabitants. Now new and better ideas were prevalent. They made all understand the necessity of interior, moral transformation of men and society. Finally, it was felt that true enlightenment consists in clearly comprehending the duty of one individual towards another, that human beings should be treated as such, and not as Volinski and many like him had treated them. During the reign of Peter the Great and subsequently, it was felt that individuals should be rendered suitable for service by receiving a certain amount of education, or, in other words, that they should be able to read and write and to know calculation. But now it was acknowledged that society would not advance much with so limited a form of education, and that moral training was also requisite; true enlightenment, by which alone good citizens could be formed. These new views and aims were especially felt in Russia during the second half of the eighteenth century, and doubtless were not a little fostered by a knowledge of French literature, which diffused more humane ideas. Thus, while Elizaveta Petrovna occupied the throne, we remark a softening of manners and an awakening consciousness of human dignity. As we have already observed, the chief upholder of these new and better inspirations was Elizaveta's favourite, Count

Ivan Ivanovitch Shoovalov, distinguished not merely as a nobleman who protected enlightenment, but especially because, in his own person, he showed the fruits of enlightenment. Besides, Count Ivan Ivanovitch was one whose reputation was spotless. He never stained his good name by accepting bribes. He was devoid of all petty ambition. One very rare feature at this epoch was remarkable in Count Ivan Ivanovitch Shoovalov. We allude to his kindness towards inferiors. In general, in intercourse with others, he maintained a 'noble urbanity,' as his contemporaries expressed themselves, resulting from the acknowledgment of human dignity in himself and in his fellow-men. All who knew him affirmed that they never approached him without experiencing a peculiar kind of gladness (Soloviev, p. 301).

#### EXTERIOR POLICY

During the reign of Elizaveta Petrovna, exterior policy was administered by Alexei Petrovitch Bestoojev Rumine, already known by diplomatic service rendered to Peter I., and speedily promoted by Anna Ioannovna on account of Biron's favour. Bestoojev, however, fell along with Biron. But when Elizaveta Petrovna became empress, Bestoojev's friend Lestocq begged her majesty once more to elevate Bestoojev, and to make him vice-chancellor. The chancellor was the old Prince Alexei Michaelovitch Tscherkasski, at whose death Bestoojev became chancellor (1742).

The first solicitude of the new government was war with Sweden. For although the Swedes had commenced hostilities on Russia under pretext of upholding Elizaveta Petrovna's rights, notwithstanding, when Elizaveta made them felt, the views of her defenders altered, and they demanded restoration of the part of Finland which Peter I. had taken from them. But the war only proved the weakness of Sweden and the strength of Russia. The Russians, commanded by Lacey, took town after town in Finland. Finally, in 1743, peace was concluded at Abo, by which Russia received the province of Kroo-mengorsk, while the river Kumen was designated as boundary between the two states.

Meanwhile, Lestocq and Bestoojev became enemies. Lestocq endeavoured to confirm the alliance of Russia with France and Prussia against Austria and England. Bestoojev was opposed to that alliance. Chétardie a second time came to Russia, in order to maintain the interest of his own court, *i.e.* to uphold Lestocq and to overthrow Bestoojev. But the chancellor knew of the conspiracy formed against him, used every means to avert the blow and to ruin his adversaries. He seized the correspondence of Chétardie and showed it to the



empress. In the said correspondence there was question of bribery, and proof was given that Lestocq was paid for his services by the French court. Finally, Chétardie, in his letters, used very unfavourable expressions concerning Elizaveta herself; consequently, Chétardie was sent out of the country. Lestocq was exiled, first to Ooglicht (government of Yaroslavl), and then to Oostioog (government of Vologda). Chopin, in his *Histoire de Russie*, says that Lestocq was tortured three times. Other authors, however, do not make this statement. Lestocq was an unprincipled, exceedingly bad man, as we shall subsequently have occasion to remark.

The struggle between Lestocq and Bestoojev is characteristic of court intrigues at that epoch. Foreign policy was the cause of this enmity. For, while Lestocq, bought by French gold, aimed at promoting the alliance between Russia and France, Bestoojev deemed that it was more advantageous for Russia to seek alliance with Austria. Lestocq, in order to injure his rival, raised a report of a conspiracy. Two ladies of the highest circles—Natalia Lopoochine and the Countess Bestoojev, wife of the upper house-steward, brother of the chancellor—were accused of plotting, along with the Austrian ambassador, Marquis de Botta, in order to restore the exiled family of Brunswick to the throne of Russia. Countess Bestoojev and Natalia Lopoochine (the latter along with her husband and son) were tortured, publicly beaten with the knout, and then had their tongues cut out. Finally, the accused were banished (1743). Such punishments 1743. proved that under French jackets embroidered with gold there still beat cruel hearts, while the brutal practices of ancient Russia yet existed even in the highest society of that epoch. And yet Elizaveta, on the night of the conspiracy which raised her to the throne, made a vow that, in case of success, she would put none to death during her reign. (See Ilovaiski's *Outlines of Russian History*, eighth edition, pp. 317-318.)

During this interval the affairs of western Europe attracted the attention of the Russian court. The war for the inheritance of Austria continued, and Frederick II. of Prussia triumphed. The Empress Maria Theresa everywhere sought help. Elizaveta Petrovna had just cause of discontent with Austria, whose minister, the Marquis de Botta, then in St. Petersburg, had participated in the conspiracy we have already mentioned. But, by the advice of Bestoojev, Elizaveta made peace with Maria Theresa, formed alliance with her, and sent her a force of thirty-seven thousand men. Their appearance in Germany, under command of Prince Repnine, contributed much to the termination of war for the Austrian dominions. Austria, England, France, and Prussia then concluded peace at Aix-la-Chapelle, 1748.



PARTICIPATION OF RUSSIA IN THE SEVEN YEARS' WAR—REASONS WHICH  
OCCASIONED IT

It may be said that the war for the inheritance of the Austrian dominions was but the introduction to another important, bloody struggle, namely, the Seven Years' War.

Austria considered the conditions of peace concluded at Breslau and at Dresden, in virtue of which it ceded Silesia to Prussia, humiliating to itself, and therefore thought of revenge and of beginning a new war with Frederick II. Austria thus sought allies, and urged the chief states of Europe to join its cause, including even France, although France had for a lengthened period been the rival of Austria, with a view to maintain the equilibrium of Europe. While all Europe was during this interval awaiting the issue of events, the flames of war broke out in America, and quickly spread to Europe. The spirit of the times, the establishment of the mercantile system in Europe, the aim of Europeans to conquer colonies, Cromwell's celebrated law concerning navigation, the immense wealth obtained by Holland from external trade—all these reasons aroused more and more the spirit of envy and hatred among Europeans, and produced this war—the first fruits of the mercantile and colonial systems, from which issued many other wars of the same kind, prolonged to our own times.

The disputes in America between the French and English concerning boundaries of colonies led to war. It began by the French taking the island of Minorca, which belonged to the English. The intention of France to seize Hanover excited all Europe and hastened war, already prepared by the cabinet of Vienna. Prussia resolved to defend Hanover, which belonged to the king of England. Austria took up arms against Prussia with the hope and intention to obtain Silesia again. Russia desired to join its forces to those of Austria. Saxony also joined Austria, in anticipation of founding its own greatness on the ruins of the Prussian monarchy. Sweden entertained similar views, made alliance with France, and opposed Prussia. Many reigning German princes joined Austria. Some of them took the part of Prussia, and not a few remained neutral. In this wise broke out the struggle in Europe known by the name of the Seven Years' War.

1756—Seven  
Years' War.

1757.

In 1756 Frederick II. commenced this struggle, in October, by invading Saxony and taking Dresden. 'I do not fear my enemies in Austria and France,' said he, 'if only Russia remains quiet; but what shall I do if I am obliged to fight with the Russians also?' And what he feared took place. In 1757 a Russian army of eighty-three thousand men, commanded by Apraxine, crossed

the Prussian frontiers. Memel surrendered. On August 30, Apraxine completely beat a Prussian force, headed by Lewald, at Gross Egernsdorff; but, instead of profiting by the victory and advancing further, Apraxine retreated to Poland, as if he had been defeated. The ambassadors of France and Austria thereupon loudly complained to the empress of Apraxine's proceeding, which clearly proved a desire to shield the king of Prussia. The empress ordered Apraxine to appear in St. Petersburg, and there to give an account of his actions. His documents were seized, and, according to them, it was discovered that Apraxine had acted by the advice of his friend, the chancellor Bestoojev. Apraxine was delivered up to judgment, and died of a stroke after the first interrogation. Bestoojev was then accused 'of extensive and injurious designs, of enmity to the sovereign, and attempts at violating her safety.' He was therefore exiled to his estates, and Count Michael Vorontzov was nominated to his post as chancellor.

One Russian author, Kaidanov (p. 334), states that the retreat of the Russians after the victory of Gross Egernsdorff took place in consequence of Bestoojev's policy. At that epoch the empress was very ill. In the event of her death, Bestoojev formed a plan to remove Prince Peter Feodorovitch from the throne, and in his stead to proclaim the little Grand Duke Paul Petrovitch sovereign, under the tutelage of his mother, the Grand Duchess Ekaterina Alexéevna. Bestoojev had had the misfortune to incur the displeasure of Peter Feodorovitch. Hence it was that the chancellor deemed it necessary to have an army in readiness, and ordered Apraxine to return immediately to Russia.

These circumstances were remarkably favourable to Frederick II., and probably not a little aided him to gain the victories of Rosbach and Leiten. Meanwhile the empress recovered. She rejoiced to hear that the Russians had triumphed at Gross Egernsdorff, and was displeased at Apraxine's retreat.

In 1758 the Russian forces, commanded by Fermor, a second time entered 1758. Prussia. The Cossacks and Kalmucks frightfully devastated the country. On August 14, between Darmeetzel and Tsrndorff, Fermor met Frederick II. himself. In that bloody battle, renewed twice, the Russians lost 19,000 killed and 3000 prisoners. The Prussians lost 11,000 men. In 1759 a third campaign in Prussia 1759. took place, under command of Count Saltikov. Frederick was completely defeated by the Russians, between Frankfort-on-the-Oder and Koonersdorff 1759—Battl of Koonersdorff, 11th August. (1st August), so that the famous king of Prussia considered himself lost, and began to think of committing suicide, as the only means to save his honour.

During the campaign of 1760, the Russians, commanded by Tschernishev, took Berlin, but not for a lengthened period. The campaign of 1761 was undertaken 1761.



under command of Bootoorline. At that time, in Pomerania, in different skirmishes, Soovorov began to distinguish himself. Roomiantzev took Colberg. The means of Frederick II. were exhausted. His only ally—England—was about to abandon him. But he was saved by the death of the Empress Elizabeth Petrovna, which took place December 25, 1761, in her fifty-third year.

## CHAPTER XX

### INTERIOR ADMINISTRATION DURING THE REIGN OF ELIZAVETA PETROVNA

IN December 1741, Elizaveta Petrovna intimated that, in the administration of the state, she desired to restore the same order of things which had existed while her father, Peter the Great, occupied the throne. That order had been abolished by the upper secret council and then by the cabinet. Elizaveta restored to the senate its former signification. The compilation of laws did not much advance during the empress's reign. In order to facilitate the labour, Elizaveta devised a special plan. That was to compose separate parts of the code, and to assign them to select individuals from various departments which concerned those parts. To listen to the code, chosen persons were summoned from each province from among the nobles and merchants. On September 30, an ukaze was issued to abolish capital punishment. In its stead the knout and exile were adopted. Since this epoch, capital punishment has ceased in Russia, except for political crimes.

As the Empress Elizaveta Petrovna was much attached to the Russo-Greek faith, she took special care that religious services should be suitably performed, and that churches and images should be kept in order, also that parents should instruct their children in religion. For that purpose catechists were sent to various districts. In 1751 a new and revised edition of the Bible was printed and sold. In 1754 orders were given to elect bishops and archbishops from Great Russia, which proved that learning had there made progress among the clergy. The Raskol, or schism, in the church did not meanwhile diminish. There were even frequent cases of fanatical schismatics, who burned themselves to death. In the town of Oostioog (government of Vologda), on one occasion, there were no fewer than fifty-three persons who burned themselves at the same time, while one hundred and seventy-two also did so in Siberia. In 1761 a law was made which prohibited the clergy from using violent measures while investigating schismatics. This order was issued from the fact that in one house one hundred and fifty Raskolniks intimated that they had determined to destroy themselves in order to escape from the plunder and devastation of those sent against them.



As regards armies, one important act was accomplished during the reign of Elizaveta Petrovna. That was the division of Russia into five parts, from which recruits were to be taken. An annual recruiting was to be made of one man from a hundred, but not in all the state, only in the fifth part, so that the act of furnishing recruits happened to each part once in five years. In 1751 Servians professing the Russo-Greek faith in Austrian dominions were permitted to settle in the south of Russia. The land there granted then received the name of New Servia. From Turkish domains, emigrants were also allowed to come, provided they were of the Greek religion. Four armies were formed of these Servians. Instead of placing old officers and soldiers in monasteries, as had hitherto been the case, a so-called 'Invalid's Home' was founded in Kazame, like that in Paris. In the governments of Kazame, Nijni-Novgorod, Voronej, and Bielgorod, almshouses were erected for disabled soldiers. Towards the close of Elizaveta Petrovna's reign, endeavours were made to organise refuges for widows and orphans of those in service. Monasteries were chosen in Moscow for that purpose, and inquiries were made as to how such institutions were conducted abroad. In 1760 a government lottery was formed for wounded officers and soldiers.

In 1754 a government bank was instituted, for the purpose of lending money to prevent those being ruined who borrowed from private individuals; for the latter took interest amounting to ten, twelve, and even fifteen per cent., 'which is not done in the whole world,' adds the ukaze. Government likewise made every effort to promote inward commerce.

Count Peter Ivanovitch Shoovalov was chiefly instrumental in establishing these measures, while Ivan Ivanovitch Shoovalov particularly turned his attention to means which demanded enlightenment and instruction.

In 1755 a university and two gymnasiums attached to it were founded in Moscow 1755. according to the plan of Shoovalov. The university was especially for nobles and those of various classes. One gymnasium was for nobles, the other for different ranks. Moscow was particularly chosen as the city in which the university should be founded, for various reasons. First of all, many nobles and those of different ranks lived there. Then the situation of the city was central and easily reached. Living, at that epoch, was moreover cheap in Moscow. The university had three faculties, those of jurisprudence, medicine, and philosophy, with ten professors. Shoovalov, moreover, maintained the necessity of founding schools and gymnasiums in different governments. In Orenburg a school was erected for the children of those in exile. In 1761 double pay was assigned to doctors who desired to go abroad in order to complete their knowledge of medicine.

But in spite of all these endeavours to advance civilisation and enlightenment,

Elizaveta Petrovna, towards the close of her reign, had cause to complain bitterly of inward enemies, who hindered progress. Such, for example, were unjust judges who took bribes. Other internal enemies also existed in form of highway robbers, who continued to perpetrate great crimes. Along the Oka to Kazame, gangs of fifty men used to sail about. They captured vessels and set fire to villages. Chinese government caravans going to Siberia scarcely escaped from the cannons, while voevodes paid but little attention to such proceedings. Even in Moscow, too, as in the days previous to Peter the Great, the followers of nobles robbed both during the day and during the night. On the Oka, above Nijni, in two vessels, there appeared no fewer than eighty robbers, perfectly well armed with cannons. A force sent against them by government was defeated.

As for Little Russia, during the reign of Elizaveta Petrovna, in 1743, while the empress went on pilgrimage to Kiev, the elder Cossacks presented a petition, begging that they might be allowed to choose a hetman. The senate then received orders to consider the subject. The senate, however, hesitated, because the hetman its members had in view was still receiving his education abroad. He was Cyril Gregorievitch, younger brother of Alexei Razoomovski. At last the Cossack assembly or 'Rada' took place at Gloohov, and Cyril Razoomovski, at the age of twenty-two, when already president of the Academy of Sciences, was elected hetman (1750).

## CHAPTER XXI

### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RUSSIAN NOBLES DURING THE REIGN OF ELIZAVETA PETROVNA

'A LOVE of luxury, which began along with the imitation of manners and customs of western Europe, greatly increased during the reigns of Anna Ioannovna and Elizaveta Petrovna. The higher classes of Russian society surrounded themselves with the outward brilliancy of European civilisation, and zealously copied the fashions of the west. Besides, the custom of living above one's means also became universal—a custom very remarkable in half-educated society.

'Women, delivered by Peter I. from the state of Oriental seclusion and thralldom in which they had hitherto been kept, were speedily carried away by luxury and a love of expensive attire. They felt the power of beauty. They were no longer restrained by outward obstacles. Besides, they had no moral support in their surroundings, and therefore were soon dominated by passion. For these reasons, among women of the upper classes of society at this epoch light morals were very frequent.



‘An honourable exception to this remark was, notwithstanding, to be found in the person of the noble-minded Princess Natalia Borisovna Dolgorookova (born Sheremeteva), of whom we have already frequently made mention.’

‘But although changes so important had been partially introduced, yet, in the greater part of Russian society, there still prevailed the same patriarchal manners, customs, and belief which had been characteristic before the reign of Peter the Great. The education of youth, which forms the chief solicitude of civilised nations, had in reality advanced but little at this epoch. Distinguished personages began to adopt the custom of teaching their children foreign languages; and it not unfrequently happened that the teachers then chosen were foreign emigrants, among whom some had frequently been servants or hairdressers. Consequently, they were totally unfitted for their new occupation. Count Ivan Ivanovitch Shoovalov hoped that by founding a university in Moscow, these incompetent teachers, who often received a high salary, would be replaced by Russian preceptors. The instruction of those who were not rich consisted, as formerly, merely in being able to read church books in Slavonic. These persons generally began by learning the alphabet, then they read the breviary and finished with the psalter.

‘Manstein mentions in his notes that Biron was exceedingly fond of outward show and pomp. Hence, Anna Ioannovna strove to render her court one of the most brilliant in Europe, and regretted no expense for its adornment, while the courtiers of that epoch eagerly seconded her desire. But at first, showy dress rarely combined elegance and taste. Very often an individual was to be seen clad in rich attire, but with an ugly wig on his head, and seated in a sorry conveyance, drawn by bad horses. The same remark was also applicable to the houses of Russian nobles. On the one hand, silver and gold sparkled, while on the other, the eye was shocked by untidiness and dirt! Meanwhile, in consequence of the increase of luxury, large sums went abroad. It therefore sometimes happened that foreign speculators, who opened warerooms for fashion in St. Petersburg, would, in the space of two or three years, amass a considerable capital.

‘During the reign of Elizaveta Petrovna, luxury among ladies of higher ranks attained an incredible degree. The empress herself, indeed, gave the example in this respect. She liked to dress handsomely, and changed her attire several times a day. After her death, no fewer than fifteen thousand dresses were found in her wardrobe, together with a corresponding number of other articles for a lady’s costume. At this period, taste had besides made great progress. Thus, during Elizaveta Petrovna’s reign, St. Petersburg was adorned with magnificent buildings, from the plans of an Italian architect, Count Rastrelli. Among those buildings



the first place is occupied by the Winter Palace, built towards the close of the empress's reign.

‘Regarding the condition of provincial nobles at that epoch, we learn many curious details from the *Notes* of Major Danilov.

‘The first instruction of Danilov was received from a village sexton, who tormented children by forcing them to remain too long seated in one position, and by frequently using the rod, then considered as a necessary accompaniment of learning. Subsequently, Danilov entered a school for the artillery in Moscow. There, the teacher was a subaltern who rarely for one day appeared at the school without being in a state of intoxication. Consequently, he flogged his unhappy pupils without mercy. Danilov, while yet a child, visited his relative, the voevode of Dankov (government of Riazane). Before Christmas, the voevode used to send Danilov along with his own son, to sing carols in different parts of the district. The two youths were also accompanied by servants and several empty sledges. Every day the sledges returned to the voevode, full of corn and living fowls. On such occasions, the voevode's servants collected this sort of contribution even from houses where the boys had sung no carols.

‘Besides, Danilov's *Notes* narrate that an ordinary occurrence at this epoch was the appearance of robbers, who plundered the houses of proprietors. Narrations are also given of peasants who revolted against landholders, and who were only subdued by forces sent from towns.

‘As for bribes, the great extent to which they existed amongst officials we learn from the following circumstance:—Danilov's son-in-law, after the death of his brother, inherited a large estate. But other relatives began to dispute with him; and only on receiving a village with fifty peasants did the secretary decide in the son-in-law's favour. After receiving the estate, the new heir began to neglect his service. However, as a nobleman of that epoch could not take his demission from his own desire, Danilov's son-in-law took an annual leave of absence from his regiment. On that account, he made presents to the military secretary; each time, the latter received twelve peasants, with their wives and children. The military scribe was, notwithstanding, more conscientious than the secretary, and took only one peasant for the passport.

‘Bolotov, another nobleman who has left *Notes*, records many curious, interesting details of provincial life at that epoch. For example, several of his acquaintances, petty nobles and landholders, used frequently to visit at the estate which belonged to his mother. The amusements of these guests were nearly the same as during the seventeenth century. “In the morning,” says Bolotov, “at our house there was, in general, a lunch fit for holidays. Then

followed dinner. After it, we rested a little. We next ate again. This was followed by tea; and, finally, we supped. On awaking, we once more began to eat as before."

'At the same time, we learn from many law pleas, preserved till the present day, that the intercourse of neighbouring proprietors was rarely amicable, on account of indistinctly defined boundaries between their possessions. Attacks on neighbours, violent fighting, seizing of land, were the order of the day. Yet, from the very fact of the above-mentioned *Notes* existing at all, we notwithstanding do learn that the number of enlightened persons who began to adopt new European ideas was gradually augmented.

'In fact, Bolotov himself was an example that amongst the Russians of that epoch a knowledge of Western literature commenced to be diffused. He spent his last money in order to obtain books, and did not cease to read them even while participating in military expeditions.' (Ilovaïski, pp. 287-289.)

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE LOWER CLASSES

AFTER the reforms introduced in Russia by Peter I., the distinction between the higher and lower classes of the people became greater. The former more and more adopted foreign customs, while the lower ranks remained true to the usages of the ancient Russians. Besides, the existence of bondage and the want of public schools formed insurmountable barriers to the mental progress and the material prosperity of the rural population.

Servitude continued to extend by legislation, even after Peter I. Thus, peasants were prohibited from acquiring immovable property in towns and districts, from making contracts, from renting farms. Proprietors were permitted to sell serfs as recruits, and could also send them in exile to Siberia. Government, moreover, took care that none should avoid paying dues to the crown, and bestowed special attention on serfs who belonged to no particular condition—such, for example, as church-servants, workmen without a master, and other so-called 'roving individuals.' They were simply included as belonging to the proprietor on whose land they lived. So great an extent of bondage was favoured by the spirit of the times, prevalent during the existence of powerful minions at court, who thought merely of their own personal advantage. Provincial administration still presented an irregular combination of ancient Moscovite regulations and the institutions of Peter I. The measures taken for the safety of society were



particularly defective. The oppression of landed proprietors, the injustice of voevodes, still continued, and occasioned great trouble. Peasants rebelled against the tyranny of their possessors in the only way they could do so, or, in other words, by running away and not unfrequently afterwards forming gangs of highway robbers. In order to subdue the rebellious inhabitants of villages, detachments of military were sent there, and the soldiers beat and plundered the villagers.

Against highway robbers it was much more difficult to struggle. Besides the weakness of the rural police, and the negligence of the voevodes, robbers were favoured by the thinly-populated districts, the difficulty of communication, as well as the vast extent of forests and steppes. Robbery was chiefly carried on near the Volga, whose desert banks abounded in convenient lurking-places. We have already alluded to the crimes perpetrated by these robbers, and mentioned that they sometimes even fought with government troops. And, although Cossacks had outlived their ancient condition, they notwithstanding lent a helping hand to this scourge of Russian land. The Cossacks of the Volga aided robbery in the south-east, while the Zaporogs, along with runaway peasants, made marauding excursions in neighbouring Russian and Polish provinces.

The helpless condition of villages attacked by robbers we learn from the *Notes* of the Princess Natalia Borisovna Dolgorookova. After Anna Ioannova's ascension of the throne, the Dolgorookovs received orders to withdraw and to live in one of their distant villages. The Dolgorookovs went there, with a long line of conveyances, and accompanied by many followers.

'Once,' writes Princess Natalia Borisovna, 'we came with the intention to pass the night at a small village situated on the banks of a very wide river. We had only halted and pitched our tents, when an immense number of peasants—all the population of the village—rushed towards us, threw themselves at our feet, wept, and exclaimed: "Save us! You have arms! To-day a letter was thrown us, with a warning that robbers will come, beat us to death, and then burn our houses! Help us! Save us from a dreadful death, for we have no means of defence! We have only axes! This is a place infested with robbers! Last week, in the neighbourhood, a village was quite ruined! The peasants fled, and the village was burned!"'

The travellers did not sleep during the whole night. They made all ready for defence. But probably the robbers heard of what was going on; for, that night at least, they did not appear.



## CHAPTER XXIII

### LITERATURE AND SCIENCE

FROM the epoch of reform introduced by Peter the Great, the influence of Western literature was felt in Russia. That influence, however, also introduced a slavish imitation of European models, and augmented secular literature in Russia. The representatives of this new literature were, at the same time, zealous upholders of Peter's reforms. Among the first of such was Prince Antioch Kantemir (son of the Moldavian hospodar who became a Russian subject during the reign of Peter I.). Kantemir was Russian ambassador in London and in Paris. He was known as the author of satires. They are written in ponderous verse, according to Latin and French models. Kantemir especially ridiculed the defects of contemporary higher classes, such, for example, as laziness, petty vanity, etc. As a specimen, one satire derides 'the envy and pride of malicious nobles.'

A certain Aretophil, a lover of virtue, meets a sorrowful nobleman and asks him 'why he is sad, like one in search of a patriarch's rank, or who has not suitably placed his stud of horses? Has he been forbidden to drive tandem, or to wear a rich garment, or to swaddle his servant in gold? Did he not shuffle the cards properly? Was the wine expensive?' etc. etc.

It turned out that the nobleman was in grief from envy. Persons sprung from the lower classes received rank and estates, while he—the issue of distinguished, glorious ancestors—remained in the shade! Aretophil proved to the nobleman that in reality his ancestors were glorious by their services, but that he himself was only experienced in playing at cards, in judging foreign wine and fashionable dress!

From the reign of Elizaveta Petrovna the French language began to be much spoken among the upper classes of Russian society, and a close imitation of French literature, particularly the false classic, was also observable. At the head of that school was Soomorokov, whose tragedies and comedies were written in a bombastic style. But contemporaries, having as yet no other more elegant dramatic compositions in Russ, were pleased with Soomorokov's writings, and surnamed him 'the Russian Racine.' Soomorokov was also the first director of a public theatre, founded in 1756.

Public dramatic representations in Moscow had commenced during the reign of Peter I. They, however, ceased when the court removed to St. Petersburg. During the reigns of Anna Ioannovna and Elizaveta Petrovna, there was generally a company of foreign actors at court. Russian pieces were sometimes acted by

pupils of the cadet corps. From their example Feodor Volkov, son of a merchant of Kostroma, a singularly gifted man, arranged theatrical representations in Yaroslavl. On hearing of his success, Elizaveta Petrovna summoned him and his associates to St. Petersburg. Among them was the famous actor Dmitrevski. These performers constituted the first Russian troupe of the imperial theatre in the new capital.

To this epoch also belongs Lomonosov's activity. His native place was on the shores of the White Sea—the rugged country of hardy mariners. Son of a fisherman of Holmogori (government of Archangel), Lomonosov ran off to Moscow, in order there to satisfy his ardent desire for learning. He studied in the Moscow clerical academy, and completed his learning in Germany with the famous philosopher Wolff. Finally Lomonosov acquired the renown of a learned man and a great writer. The literary energy of Lomonosov was many-sided. He wrote Russian history, grammar, poems, although his strong points were natural philosophy and chemistry. Lomonosov, however, rendered special service to the language of Russian literature by endeavouring to purify it from a mixture of foreign words and ponderous Slavonian church phrases. In his panegyric odes, in praise of events during contemporary reigns, Lomonosov imitated German and Latin poets. His odes are high-flown and bombastic; but, at least, they are distinguished by purity and harmonious language, hitherto unknown in Russian book-literature. Lomonosov took a lively interest in the plan of the first Russian university founded in 1755.

The desire of Peter I., in organising the Academy of Sciences, had been to form Russian teachers there. But that desire was not realised. The St. Petersburg academy became a meeting-place for German men of science. In general, they did not understand the Russian language, and were besides at enmity with those Russians who gradually began to enter the circle of the academy. Lomonosov was especially opposed to the German party. Notwithstanding, that did not prevent the St. Petersburg academy from rendering important service to science in general. It was the want of higher instruction which prompted Elizaveta's favourite, Ivan Ivanovitch Shoovalov, to found the university of Moscow.

During the following year (1756) the university began to publish the *Moskovski Viedomosti* ('Moscow Newspaper') from the model of the 'Petersburg Newspaper,' issued by the Academy of Sciences.

In 1767, also by Shoovalov's desire, an Academy of the Fine Arts was opened in St. Petersburg for Russian architects, painters, and sculptors.

While authors among the higher classes of Russian society strictly copied foreign writers, the lower orders were quite content with a considerable circulation



of secret schismatic (Raskolnik) literature. These compositions were chiefly aimed against the introduction of new ideas, and praised persons who had suffered from attachment to the old faith. These works were frequently circulated in manuscript, and greatly awakened the interest of adherents to the ancient belief. Some of the above-mentioned books were also printed in western Russian monasteries.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### ELIZAVETA PETROVNA

IN Andréev's fascinating work entitled *Representatives of Power in Russia after Peter I.* (pp. 117-137), we find many curious, interesting details of the Empress Elizaveta Petrovna. Among others are the following:—

‘On the autocratic throne of Russia there appeared a woman with the merits and defects of an ordinary individual, who, till mature age, had not aspired to imperial power, and who was elevated to an exalted position by the course of passing events. Elizaveta Petrovna accordingly felt herself incapable of government; and that gives a peculiar tone to her whole reign. The private habits, the personal character, the individuality of Elizaveta, had considerable influence on each act of her administration.

‘Elizaveta Petrovna had received a European education. She had become unaccustomed to the French language during the reign of Anna Ioannovna, and had nearly forgotten how to speak it. But, on the other hand, she had not forgotten how to dance. Notwithstanding her more modern training, there was much in Elizaveta Petrovna which showed a remnant of ideas prevalent in ancient Russia. For example, she was persuaded that a husband had a right to beat his wife. Thus, when Safonov (married to the empress's cousin, born Hendrikova) beat his wife, Elizaveta Petrovna allowed that he might do so, and only sentenced him to a three days' arrest because “no one dared thus to chastise a relative of the empress”!

‘Elizaveta Petrovna had naturally much self-love, and did not keep any jesters. She even disliked to hear others ridiculed in her presence. She, however, paid tribute to the times by having a fool, named Aksakov, in her service.

‘He was well known from the fact of having frightened the empress, on one occasion, by bringing her a hedgehog. Elizaveta, in terror, ran away. The hedgehog reminded her of a mouse, and she particularly dreaded mice.

‘Elizaveta Petrovna had an especial horror of death. When obliged from economy—during the reign of Anna Ioannovna—to wear a black mantle lined



with white, there was no alternative; but, in general, she hated mourning. She was very superstitious, and could in no wise bear to look on the dead. In 1755, a ukaze was issued which forbade a corpse to be carried past the palace. Elizaveta Petrovna would in no wise enter a house where there was a dead body. When Apraxine, the victor of Gross-Egernsdorff, died, after his first judgment, in a building of the crown at Tsarskoe Selo, near St. Petersburg, his remains were removed thence under a tent. Elizaveta's extreme susceptibility was also observable on other occasions. Once a report was spread that an unknown individual had been found in the empress's bedroom, where he had penetrated with the intention to make an attempt on her life. Elizaveta then, for many nights afterwards, slept in different apartments, so that none might know where she reposed. Her nervous condition was doubtless also augmented by her turning night into day, and day into night. She used to go to the theatre at eleven o'clock at night. All courtiers were then obliged to appear. Those who failed to do so were fined fifty roubles. During Elizaveta's reign the nobles began to give musical evening parties, but they concluded long before court receptions did so. Supper was there served after midnight. The empress lay down to sleep at five o'clock in the morning; thus, the greater part of the day was spent in repose. At that time, any conveyance was forbidden to pass over a bridge near the palace, in case the noise might awake her majesty; and if the sentinel on duty was in bad humour, he would not then allow even foot-passengers to cross the bridge.

'When about to fall asleep, Elizaveta Petrovna liked to hear the stories of old women, or common traders, taken for that purpose from the street. They used meanwhile to rub her heels, and then she began to doze. Even after that happened, if the old women present continued to jabber too loud, then old Tschoolkov would call them to order. Tschoolkov usually slept on a small mattress in the empress's room. At first he had heated stoves in the palace; but, by Elizaveta's favour, he was promoted to the rank of general-in-chief. Sometimes Elizaveta got up earlier than little Tschoolkov. If that was the case, she would go and drag him from his bed. "Now! now! my little white swan!" exclaimed Tschoolkov, raising himself and patting her shoulder.

'We have already mentioned Elizaveta Petrovna's passion for display. She herself used to dress all her maids-of-honour at their wedding, and lent them her own diamonds for the occasion. To prevent ladies from wearing the same dress twice at a court reception, a stamp was put upon the dress. Elizaveta Petrovna liked sometimes to wear man's attire, which suited her remarkably well on account of her tall, fine figure. Masquerades were indeed fashionable, where women dressed as men and men like women; but men disliked that custom very much,

The man's attire of Elizaveta Petrovna is still preserved in the armoury hall of the Moscow Kreml.

'There is a tradition that one admirer of Elizaveta Petrovna was a certain Alexei Yakovlovitch Shoobine, a handsome young guardsman. But we have already mentioned that Elizaveta Petrovna was little better than a captive during Anna's reign, and was surrounded by spies. Shoobine was accused of being one of Elizaveta's political adherents. He was arrested, shut up in prison, and there, it is said, put into a stone box in which he could neither sit, stretch himself out, nor stand. He was at length sent in exile to Kamtschatka, and there forced to marry a woman of that country. Long afterwards, when Elizaveta ascended the throne, she recalled Shoobine from exile, and is said to have offered him her hand. But he had changed during exile. He was no longer the Shoobine of old. So he declined the honour. He was, however, promoted to the rank of general, and received an estate in the government of Nijni-Novgorod.'

Andréev also mentions a young prince of Holstein, to whom Elizaveta was engaged and to whom she was also deeply attached, but he died young.

Most Russian authors maintain that Elizaveta Petrovna was unmarried. Andréev, however, distinctly states (p. 124) that she was united to Alexei Gregorievitch Razoomovski, although the marriage was not publicly acknowledged. Andréev praises Razoomovski for magnanimity of character. Both Alexei and his brother, Cyril Razoomovski, were remarkable for extreme personal beauty.

The Razoomovskis had moreover the good sense not to be ashamed of their humble origin, and laughed when the Kiev Academy tried to prove their descent from the Lithuanian Prince Gedemin.

We have already mentioned Lestocq, Elizaveta Petrovna's French doctor. He was an unprincipled, bad man. He sold his services to the foreign power which paid him best. Elizaveta herself often used to say that if Lestocq could poison all her subjects with one spoon, he would do so. In fact, for receiving money from the Prussian government, and for poisoning Ettinger, a functionary who knew of the transaction, Lestocq was put in prison. There he tried without success to starve himself to death. When arrested, 40,000 roubles were taken from him. Eleven thousand only were returned. The remainder was spent. Eight hundred roubles were said to have been required for pens and paper during his trial. Finally, Catherine II. liberated Lestocq and gave him a pension of 7000 roubles, as well as thirty hacks of land in Livonia. Andréev, however, states that Lestocq's fall during the reign of Elizaveta Petrovna was merely occasioned by the intrigues of his enemies.



## CHAPTER XXV

REIGN OF PETER III. (FEODOROVITCH), FROM DECEMBER 25, 1761, TILL  
JULY 6, 1762

1761-1762. ACCORDING to the testimony of most Russian authors, Peter Feodorovitch was good-natured but unfortunately without penetration. In spite of his brief reign, he notwithstanding effected several important beneficial changes. In the first place, a manifesto was issued, in virtue of which the nobles were no longer obliged to serve. Henceforth they could do so or not, according to their own desire. The second amelioration introduced by Peter III. consisted in the abolition of the secret chancery, together with the denunciations and tortures accompanying it, for they had produced most injurious effects on the morality of the people, and in fact were sources of constant abuse. Real culprits very often made denunciations only to gain time and to escape from merited punishment. Others raised evil reports from malice, or calumniated the innocent, while not a few, involved in investigations, were separated from their families and prevented from participating in public and private affairs. Peter III. abolished the secret chancery, and prohibited denunciations. It was also forbidden to persecute schismatics (Raskolniks); and those who had fled to spots at the frontier were allowed to return. Certain regions in Siberia were assigned them as colonies. Forgiveness was also granted to peasants insubordinate to proprietors, if the former showed repentance. During the reign of Elizaveta Petrovna, 80,000 individuals had been exiled. Peter III. recalled 17,000 of them, among whom were Biron and Field-marshal Munnich.

As for external policy, the first act of Peter III. was to form close alliance with Prussia. In fact, Peter had unbounded admiration of Frederick II. Part of the Russian troops which had been fighting against the Prussians received orders to join Frederick's army. The others were commanded to return home. At the same time, Peter was planning war with Denmark. He indeed began to prepare for a campaign, in order to settle a dispute between the Danish king and the duke of Holstein concerning Schleswig. But a sudden change of government prevented the execution of these plans.

Peter III. had an utter want of tact, and took no pains to conceal his dislike of everything Russian. These defects, joined to his preference for foreigners, his extravagant admiration of Frederick II. of Prussia, a foolish preference for Holstein troops to the detriment of Russian soldiers, the severity of newly introduced



military discipline, occasioned great discontent among the guards. Meanwhile, the said discontent, and the too great self-reliance of Peter himself, did not escape the observation of the talented, audacious Catherine, so that Peter III. was finally forced to relinquish the throne in her favour.

Catherine's chief assistants in this important act were the brothers Orlov and the Princess Dashkov. They made use of a large party among the guards favourable to Catherine.

Dmitri Setschenev, archbishop of Novgorod, was likewise on her side, and was seconded by the other clergy, who were displeased at the intention of Peter III. to confiscate church property.

One morning (June 28, 1762), while the emperor was at his favourite summer residence of Oranienbaum, Catherine arrived in St. Petersburg from Peterhoff. The guards immediately swore allegiance to her; and their example was followed by the whole capital. On learning what had happened, Peter formed various plans for his own defence, but at the same time undertook nothing decided. In his suite was Field-marshal Munnich, who, in spite of his advanced age and lengthened exile, still continued true to his energetic, ambitious disposition. Munnich indicated the fort of Cronstadt to Peter. The emperor, however, hesitated to separate from his detachment of Holstein troops. All of a sudden, the news came that Catherine, with a well-trained army of 15,000 men, was on the way to Peterhoff. Only then did the emperor and his suite embark and set sail for Cronstadt. But it was too late. The Cronstadt garrison had meanwhile gone over to the side of the empress. It was in vain that the unwearied Munnich endeavoured to support Peter by suggesting to him several means of defence. The emperor was completely discouraged, returned to Oranienbaum, and signed an act of abdication. Some days afterwards he perished—assassinated at Ropsha.

In the *Secret Autobiography of Catherine II.* she gives a deplorable picture of what, we doubt not, is suffered by most of the portionless, miserable German princesses who renounced their religion and bartered their peace of mind in exchange for the exalted position obtained by becoming consorts of the grand dukes of Russia.

Catherine herself gives full details of her wretchedness during the first period of her married life. Peter III. she describes as a coarse, ignorant, stupid, brutal man, whose only pleasures were smoking, drinking, and tormenting animals. At the Russian court, Catherine was treated with scorn as the daughter of a poor, petty German prince. She was constantly made to feel that a great honour had been conferred upon her by being received as a member of the imperial family of Russia. In fact, at one time Catherine's position at court became so insupportable

that she implored permission to return to her mother again. The Empress Elizaveta Petrovna, however, persuaded her to remain.

According to Andréev (p. 156), when Catherine was overwhelmed with grief at her father's death, the empress sarcastically remarked that 'after all he was not a king. Consequently, his daughter was not obliged to mourn over him for a whole week!'

Elizaveta Petrovna during her latter years was little else than a coarse virago, seldom sober. She had but too well profited by the lessons both her parents had given her in the hateful vice of hard drinking.

After the birth of Paul, Catherine was left quite alone and completely neglected. Eighteen maid-servants were stuffed into one room near her own apartment, yet not one showed her kindness. The discomfort, disorder, and even dirt, of palaces—particularly temporary summer residences—were indescribable. So Catherine was alone in the saddest sense of the term. Her only consolation was reading, of which she was passionately fond. Indeed, she gradually educated herself, as she knew but little on her arrival in Russia. Hence it is that while following all the details of her eventful life, as narrated by her, we so far understand, if we can never justify, the gradual deterioration visible in her character. Then also we ask ourselves, 'In her place, would *we* have acted differently?'

In the manifesto issued by Catherine to announce the death of Peter III, it was said to have been occasioned by a hemorrhoidal colic. The remains were anatomised. Catherine mentions in her *Secret Autobiography* that 'the deceased emperor's heart was very small.' A few days after his demise, the empress invited her subjects to say farewell to Peter's corpse, 'without malice,' 'without entertaining bad remembrances.' From the same source we also learn that Peter III. said, 'Russia was not destined for him, nor he for Russia; and that in it he would perish.' Chopin, in his *Histoire de Russie*, states that although the marks of a violent death were evident, still, in order to prevent impostors from enacting the part of the deceased sovereign, his body was exposed to view according to the prevalent custom in Russia. For three days the corpse remained at the Nevski cloister. The late emperor lay in a simple coffin. Four candles, one at each corner, burned there. Peter was dressed in a shabby Holstein uniform. The hands were folded on the breast, and on the large white gloves were the stains of blood. We have already mentioned that the body had been anatomised. No magnificence, no pomp distinguished the burial in a poor grave. But thirty-four years afterwards Peter's remains were exhumed from that humble resting-place, and were again interred, with regal splendour. (Andréev, p. 168.)



We translate the following passage from Chopin's *Histoire de Russie*:—

'The less a people is free, the more is the public mind prone to adopt extreme measures. Thus in despotic states half measures are unknown. The despot must strike a blow, or fall. A subject, in a similar alternative, must either succeed or submit to capital punishment. This twofold necessity—one resulting from the other—explains the sanguinary revolutions with which we so frequently meet in the history of Russia, and in that of Oriental nations. Thus, in order fully to understand past events in a country whose constitution differs entirely from our own, we must endeavour to place ourselves in the historic centre which belongs to these events.'

Chopin furthermore maintains that the death of Peter III. was a terrible necessity. He was totally unfitted to reign. He despised the Russians and Russia. He was about to involve the latter in an expensive, useless war. Exiles sometimes returned from Siberia, such, for example, as Biron and Munnich. Catherine had advanced too far to retreat; and at this juncture she was reduced either to strike a decisive blow or herself to fall.

## CHAPTER XXVI

REIGN OF CATHERINE II. (ALEXÉEVNA), 'THE GREAT'—1762-96

AN audacious woman, of light conduct, born in one of the petty German courts, allied to many royal dynasties of Europe, now usurped the throne of all the Russias. The circumstances previous to this event, as well as the tragedy which made it incontestable, all seemed to prognosticate a stormy, difficult reign. Endued by nature with brilliant, varied talents, Catherine had gradually educated herself by literary occupation. We have already mentioned her passion for reading, and that it had proved her only solace during the first most miserable period of her married life. She had paid particular attention to the works of the best French authors of the epoch. Besides, after patient, unwearied application, she had acquired thorough knowledge of the language, history, and customs of the Russian people. In a word, she had prepared herself for a great work awaiting her, *i.e.* the administration of government in Russia. Penetrating, well skilled in making use of circumstances, successful in finding those who could execute her plans, her rare gifts called forth universal admiration. To the capability of a sovereign she likewise combined aspirations for fame and love of magnificence.

The first years of Catherine's reign did not, however, pass quietly, for many



had become accustomed to sudden changes, and hoped thereby for individual advancement.

One memorable attempt to alter the new order of things was made by a sub-lieutenant, Vasili Morovitch, belonging to a regiment of Smolensk. It is well known that the discontented formed a project to liberate Ioann Antonovitch, the prisoner of Schlüsselburg, and to place him on the throne. But that was impossible, as the last spark of reason in the prince's mind was extinguished by long captivity. Frederick II. of Prussia is blamed as the chief cause of that captivity; and Andréev (p. 176) distinctly maintains that Frederick did all in his power to prevent the family of Brunswick from again obtaining the throne of Russia. In fact, Frederick distrusted his relatives, and used habitually to affirm that 'his best allies were his nearest relations.' Andréev (p. 174) also mentions that Frederick II. in his *Notes* declares that young Prince Ioann had had opium administered to him, so that he might become an idiot.

Elizaveta Petrovna had spared Ioann; but he had become a subject of uneasiness to Catherine; and she was one who never hesitated to crush all obstacles in her path, or to commit a crime to ensure her own safety. Such was the state of affairs when Mirovitch made an attempt to liberate Ioann, and to proclaim him emperor. Ioann's guards had meanwhile received orders—during the reigns both of Elizaveta and Catherine—to kill the young prince, if any endeavoured to set him free. Andréev states (p. 179) that the judges who tried Mirovitch found out that he had acted against Catherine from personal enmity, and because he had been the victim of injustice through not receiving part of the confiscated property of his grandfather, a partisan of Mazeppa.

Chopin firmly maintains that Mirovitch was the hired accomplice of Catherine herself against Ioann, who occasioned her uneasiness as a rival claimant to the throne. Thus Mirovitch expected a reward instead of being sentenced to death. 'In fact,' adds Andréev (p. 181), 'Mirovitch was only condemned to die when it was observed that the murder of Ioann produced a deep impression on the people.' That Mirovitch was the hired agent of government, Andréev thinks so far probable, though he adds that positive proof of this is not found.

During the night between the 4th and 5th of July, Ioann Antonovitch was put to death in cold blood by his keepers, while he was asleep, and when Mirovitch failed to liberate the unhappy young prince.

Mirovitch was executed, and the revolt was thus quelled. It was, notwithstanding, followed by many others; so that Catherine's throne seemed to be undermined in all directions.

CHIEF PERSONAGES OF CATHERINE'S REIGN

As a true follower of Peter I., Catherine II. often assigned important positions to individuals of insignificant origin, but withal talented and capable of executing her plans. Amongst these personages, we especially remark the brothers Klov, Gregory, and Alexis, who, more than any others, had aided Catherine to ascend the throne, and who were especially known for their bold, decided dispositions. In the second place were the brothers Panine, Nikita (Nicetas) and Peter—wise, well-educated noblemen, whose advice was esteemed by the empress. They carried on diplomatic intercourse, and obtained European celebrity by their famous project of armed neutrality, whose aim was to defend the marine trade of neutral states, and was chiefly directed against English cruisers (1780) at the epoch of the North American War.

In the diplomatic line, after the Panines, Count Bezboroako especially distinguished himself during Catherine's reign. Prince Viazemski, too, was remarkable. For thirty years he occupied the important post of general-procurator of the senate. Count Seevers, as governor of Novgorod, obtained universal esteem, from his useful administration and for his arrangement of communication by water.

The court distinction of Gregorii Gregorievitch Orlov was, however, eventually transferred to Gregorii Alexandrovitch Potemkine. We have already mentioned him and his participation in the terrible scene enacted at Ropsha, June 28, 1762. Potemkine was the son of a petty nobleman far from rich, and a native of Smolensk. Potemkine, junior, first studied in the newly opened gymnasium of Moscow, and then passed to the university. There, however, he was expelled for laziness, and before he had completed the course of study. He next went to St. Petersburg, and entered the Horse Guards. Tall and good-looking, he was soon remarked by the empress. Andréev mentions (pp. 195-196) that Catherine accorded Potemkine her special favour from 1774 till 1776, and that during these two years he received from her thirty-seven thousand peasants and nine millions of roubles. To brilliant talents Potemkine united great ambition. Thus he speedily acquired immense influence on state affairs, and continued to maintain that influence till a short time before his death, in 1791. When in full power he liked to form extensive plans difficult to execute. His chief services consisted in colonising the new Russian country, of which he was general governor; his energetic measures in order to obtain the Crimea; the organisation of a fleet in the Black Sea; the reforms which he made in the army, while he was president of a military college, etc. For example, he introduced more suitable arms and uniforms,



ordered, cue-wigs to be cut off, and the fashion of powdering the hair to be discontinued, changed three-cornered hats for those of a lighter form, etc. It was indeed more than necessary to do so, as in Andréev's work (p. 279) we learn the following curious details regarding the military hairdressing of that epoch:—

'The curls and cues then worn caused no small trouble to the soldiers. They sometimes began to arrange their hair the evening before a parade. The hair was smeared with tallow and then sprinkled with rye-flour, as being cheaper than powder. But when already thus prepared for parade it was dangerous if the soldiers fell asleep. The curls ran the risk of being crushed, and besides, rats are fond of tallow and rye-flour, so that in fact they often ate the cues of the soldiers who fell asleep.'

Towards the close of Catherine's reign, the personage who chiefly possessed her confidence was Platon (Plato) Alexandrovitch Zoobov, remarkable for excessive arrogance and inclination to favour court intrigues.

Ivan Ivanovitch Betzkii was at this epoch remarkable as an organiser of educational institutions in Russia. Betzkii used to say to Catherine: 'Peter the Great created people in Russia; your majesty has inspired them with souls!'

In the military department two generals of that epoch by their victories added much outward brilliancy to the reign of Catherine II. They were Roomiantzev and Soovorov. The latter, on account of delicate health during childhood, had been destined by his father to civil service; but on remarking his son's inclination for military affairs, the father changed his intention, and eventually inscribed his son as a soldier of the Guards. Young Soovorov had, however, no powerful protection at court. Accordingly, for a considerable period he continued to serve in the lower ranks as a subaltern, but he had meanwhile opportunity to become acquainted with military service in all its details, and likewise to study the character of the Russian soldier. Of this information Soovorov eventually made excellent use. The Seven Years' War gave him the first opportunity to display his wonderful military talent.

Soovorov's father at first by no means approved the inclination of his son for military affairs, and not unfrequently blamed his awkwardness, reserve, and a habit of shutting himself up in his own room. It is said that on one occasion Soovorov, senior, received a visit from a neighbouring proprietor, an old general of artillery, named Hannibal. He was descended from a negro brought in childhood from Holland by Peter the Great, and placed in the military service of Russia. Peter had thus named him as an African, and in remembrance of the hero of antiquity.



While conversing with his guest, the master of the house did not conceal his disapproval of his son. The guest thereupon went upstairs to young Alexander's room, in order to see how he was occupied. On remarking the books, maps, and plans with which the boy was absorbed, the old man was astonished, and advised Soovorov, senior, to yield to his son's inclinations. When Alexander Soovorov at length attained high rank in the army, he gradually began to enact the part of an oddity. He led an original mode of life, allowed himself many strange proceedings in intercourse with others, made use of quaint Russian enigmas and proverbs; so that in would-be jest he often uttered the most biting sarcasm. It is thought that Soovorov, on the one hand, chose to enact the part of an odd fellow in order first to attract the attention of the Empress Catherine, and, on the other, to avert the influence of envy and of court intrigues. (Ilovaiski, p. 299.)

## CHAPTER XXVII

### LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE—REGULATIONS CONCERNING PROVINCES, OR SO-CALLED GOVERNMENTS OF RUSSIA

PETER I. had attempted to issue new laws, as the code of his father (Alexei Michaelovitch) was no longer suited to the wants of the state. Peter's successors had renewed the attempt, and for that purpose had formed a committee; but the undertaking did not advance. Meanwhile, the embarrassed state of the finances, the administration of justice, and the management of districts demanded better legislation. Catherine, while as yet only hereditary grand duchess, had carefully examined interior administration, and clearly saw its deficiencies.

It is thus that she herself, when empress, wrote to Nikita Ivanovitch Panine concerning the condition in which she found Russia on ascending the throne:—

'The Russian land forces, while in Prussia, had not received pay for two-thirds of a year. The finances were in so great disorder that, during the Seven Years' War, when Elizaveta Petrovna wished to borrow two millions of roubles in Holland, none supported the loan. Consequently Russia had no credit. In the interior of the empire, peasants attached to foundries and monasteries were in open disobedience to authority, and they were about to be joined by the serfs of landholders. The senate gave no heed to the abridgment of an act for appeal, but paid attention only to the act itself, with all the details, so that reading a document relative to the pasturage of the town of Masalsk occupied

the first six weeks while the senate was sitting after I ascended the throne. In governments (provinces) regulations of the senate were so badly executed that the first, and even the second, ukaze generally remained unheeded. Hence a proverbial expression: "The third ukaze is awaited." Functionaries in voevodes' seal-offices did not receive their salary. Thus they were permitted to maintain themselves on gifts, although bribes were strictly forbidden,' etc. (Ilovaiski, p. 300.)

Hence it was that at the very commencement of Catherine's reign she earnestly endeavoured to ameliorate the administration of state affairs. To effect this important purpose in all details, she summoned a rural (zemski) council, called 'Committee for the composition of a plan for a new code.' The committee was formed of deputies belonging to different conditions, and filling various government posts. The deputies were not to be under twenty-five years of age. They received salary and enjoyed certain privileges. They were chosen by vote. Those who elected the deputies furnished them with written instructions. The number of the deputies was five hundred and sixty-five.

In form of direction, the empress herself wrote eloquent 'Precepts,' chiefly borrowed from the works of Bekkaria, *On Crime and Punishment*, and from Montesquieu (*Esprit des Lois*), regarding government, law, the duty of citizens, the system of punishments, etc.

On June 30, 1767, the committee in great pomp commenced its labours in Moscow, in the angular hall of the Kreml. During the first assemblies, important discussion took place concerning state reform. The question of emancipating the serfs was even discussed, and that the empress herself desired. Notwithstanding, most of the deputies opposed the measure. Meanwhile, the deputies proposed to confer on her majesty the titles of 'the Great,' 'the Wise,' 'the Mother of her Country.' To these sounding proposals Catherine modestly replied that the last was the only one she could accept, although it was the duty of every mother to love her children. 'Posterity,' she added, 'would decide her title to the first; and God alone is "Wise."'

The sittings of the committee were divided into general assemblages and separate committees for different institutions of state. But during the following year (1768), on account of war having begun with Turkey, the general assemblages ceased, and part of the deputies dispersed. A separate committee continued for five years to form projects, under the guidance of Prince Viazemski, general procurator of the senate. Notwithstanding, the question of a new code was left undecided. However, the labours of the committee were not without important results. They furnished government with much information con-



cerning the interior condition of the country, and greatly influenced Catherine's subsequent administration, especially of districts.

REGULATIONS REGARDING PROVINCES, OR SO-CALLED GOVERNMENTS OF  
THE EMPIRE

Catherine completed the work of Peter I. in concentrating district administration. Russia was divided into fifty governments or provinces. Their dimensions were determined by the amount of population (in each, there were from three to four hundred thousand souls). These governments were divided into districts, administered by civil governors. Sometimes several governments were under the administration of one governor or viceroy, possessed of great power, and who inspected all branches of government. Along with organisation of governments, a system for the administration of justice in certain places was introduced, and that continued till recent times in Russia. The said division was introduced during the space of twenty years. At the same time a general measure of land was taken. According to the new division of old towns, their number was insufficient for the administration of districts. Thus, during Catherine's reign, two hundred villages were made into towns. However, many of them were only remarkable for poverty, and eventually disappeared from the list.

In Tver, its viceroy, Count Seevero, who had taken an active part in the organisation of provinces, opened the first transformed government (January 1776). Then he opened the government in Novgorod. The opening took place in the following manner:—The viceroy assembled the neighbouring nobles. A solemn religious service next ensued. A manifesto concerning the new government was read. Speeches in its praise were made. Next, certain individuals were chosen to fill different posts. The choice was accompanied by festivities, such as dinners, balls, masquerades, in imitation of those at court. The nobles begged permission to erect a monument in honour of the empress; and a deputation was sent to thank her for her solicitude. All these circumstances prove the progress which Russia had made in civilisation since the time of Peter I. It doubtless had been much advanced by the acquisition of the Baltic provinces; as from them there was a constant influx of German officials, both civil and military. In general, the government of Catherine II. paid great attention to the outward appearance of towns, by increasing in them the number of wide streets, and also by augmenting stone buildings. Besides the beauty of



towns, the economy of forests was likewise kept in view; and precautions were taken against conflagrations, then, as now, scourges in Russia.

Amongst the monumental buildings of Catherine's time, we remark the Kremlin of Moscow, the senate-house, with an elegant circular hall, built from a plan of the architect Kozakov. Another excellent architect of that epoch was Bajanov. In St. Petersburg, Catherine founded the Isaac Cathedral. The day dedicated to the memory of St. Isaac was the birthday of Peter I. (May 30). The cathedral was completed during the reign of Alexander II. On the open space opposite to the cathedral the empress erected a monument to Peter I. He is represented on horseback. The pedestal of the statue is a granite rock. The monument was unveiled in 1782. (Ilovaiski, p. 302.)

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### MEASURES TAKEN REGARDING DIFFERENT CLASSES—ATTENTION PAID TO ECONOMY

ALONG with the organisation of governments, new regulations were made regarding the position of different classes. Here also the empress continued the reforms begun by Peter I., while she more distinctly determined the signification, rights, and duties of various classes. In 1785 was published the so-called 'Town Position,' concluding by an organisation of 'town society.' The latter was composed of inhabitants belonging to the classes which paid dues—i.e., merchants, burghers, and members of corporations. Merchants were divided into three guilds, according to the amount of their capital. Those who possessed less than 500 roubles were called burghers. As for tradesmen, they were according to their occupation divided into corporations, like those in western Europe. All the inhabitants who paid dues assembled together and formed what was called a 'general town council,' in order to choose a mayor from among their own circle, and six members for three years, to form what was styled 'the six-membered council.' The latter, presided over by the mayor, was constantly to attend to affairs of the town, its revenues, its expenditure, its buildings, etc. But the 'six-membered council' was especially to see that crown dues were paid. In fact, the whole society was in this respect responsible.

During the same year (1785) a 'grant charter' was also given to the class of nobles, to determine their rights and privileges, as the chief supporters of the throne. The exemption of a nobleman from state service was confirmed. He

was likewise exempt from dues and from corporal punishment. The landed proprietors from each government formed their own society of nobles. They obtained a right to assemble once in three years in the government town, to consult regarding affairs of their class, and to choose persons from their own sphere to perform certain social duties, such, for example, as government and district marshal of nobility, chief of the rural (zemski) police, bailiffs of districts, etc. The nobility obtained the exclusive right to possess serfs. Peter I. had permitted certain merchants to have their own peasants, for manufactories and foundries.

Although, as we have already seen, Catherine II. had much desired the emancipation of serfs, especially at the commencement of her reign, notwithstanding, serfdom attained its highest degree, according to legislation, while the empress occupied the throne.

During the first year of her government, the peasants in certain districts were in open insurrection against proprietors. The rebels were, however, subdued without bloodshed by military detachments. But in the district of Viazemsk, the serfs of Princes Dolgorookii made so great resistance that cannons had to be fired.

The enlightened, humane Catherine II. fully comprehended all the baneful influence of serfdom on the public morals, and also its hindrance of instruction. But her views on this subject met with so much opposition from the nobles, that she was forced to relinquish her plan of reform among the peasants. Not only so: a new regulation was made which confirmed the powers of proprietors. For example, on account of frequent complaints that land-holders ill-treated their peasants, the latter were forbidden to complain of their masters, under penalty of the knout, exile, or sentence of perpetual labour as galley-slaves. Meanwhile, the number of serfs greatly increased, in consequence of the custom of giving peasants belonging to the crown as rewards for services rendered to the government.

Catherine II. executed one important plan which Peter I. had in view: that was, the sequestration of church property. Soon after ascending the throne she appointed a committee to estimate the exact amount of church land and revenues. By one ukaze of 1764 all the church peasants of Great or Central Russia 1764. (amounting to 900,000) were consigned to the jurisdiction of a so-called 'College of Economy.' Instead of the previous poll-tax, they were henceforth obliged to pay a rouble and a half for each individual. A new civil list was made of monasteries and archiepiscopal churches. They were in future to receive a certain salary from the 'College of Economy.' Besides, they were still to retain



several popular appurtenances. The property thus taken away by the 'College of Economy' either passed to private individuals or to other departments of the state.

Of course, this measure produced much discontent among the clergy. Arsenius Matzievitch, metropolitan of Kostov, was particularly opposed to the new order of things, for which opposition he was degraded and imprisoned.

1768. One remarkable financial measure of Catherine's reign was the introduction of bank-notes or paper money. The inconvenience of a great number of copper coins was felt, and thus induced the government to introduce bank-notes similar to those in western Europe. Banks for this purpose were organised in 1768, both in St. Petersburg and in Moscow, with capital of a million of roubles of metal money. But after some time, various wants of the state, as well as frequent war, induced government to augment the number of these bank-notes to 150 millions of roubles. Consequently, the increased currency of paper money caused it to fall in value, while the price of goods became higher. Along with the banks for the nobility and merchants, founded by Elizaveta Petrovna, Catherine instituted a government loan bank, for lending to nobles and inhabitants of towns at five per cent. (1786).

During the reign of Catherine II., great attention was also paid to crown revenue received from taverns. Hitherto, a mixed system had been carried on. The sale of strong drink was partially undertaken by certain chosen individuals among traders, and called 'tavern heads' (by village bailiffs, during the reign of Peter I.), or partially it was given on lease to private individuals.

1765. Catherine II. formed a committee to investigate the question, and the committee decided in favour of leases (1765). (Ilovaiski, p. 302-305.)

## CHAPTER XXIX

### SOUTHERN REGIONS

FROM the gradual increase of centralisation in the Russian empire, Little Russia and the Zaporog districts could no longer maintain their separate existence. Even during the life of Cyril Razoomovski the dignity of hetmanship was definitely abolished (1764), and a general governor of Little Russia was appointed in the person of the subsequently famous Roomiantzev-Zadooniaski. Little Russia, like other parts of the empire, was then divided into governments, and peasants were



declared serfs of the proprietor on whose land the ukaze of 1783 had found them. There also church property was sequestered.

The Zaporog Sietsch or Cossack assembly had likewise outlived its century. When southern Russian steppes were peopled and the organisation of new Russian governments began, then the Zaporog Cossacks appeared in the midst of Russian districts. But the former destination of the Zaporogs—*i.e.* to defend the southern frontiers from the incursions of Crimean Tartars—had no longer any reality, on account of altered boundaries. Meanwhile, the restless Zaporogs did not wish to relinquish old habits, and, with bands of robbers, frequently attacked neighbouring villages and towns.

By order of the empress, the Cossack Sietsch (assembly) was occupied by a Russian detachment, and the Zaporog forces ceased to exist (1775). Part of them went to Turkey and there became Turkish subjects. Others removed towards the river Kooban, and formed an army of Black Sea Cossacks, who, at the close of Catherine's reign, received the island of Fanagoria, along with land between the Kooban and the sea of Azoph. But previously, the Volga Cossack forces were removed to the Terek as a chastisement for protecting robbers, and also for participating in Poogatschev's revolt. At the Terek, as formerly, the Cossacks continued to serve Russian land, by defending its boundaries against the inroads of marauding Caucasian mountaineers.

The population of southern Russian steppes began, as we have already seen, during the reign of Elizaveta Petrovna. Several thousands of Slavonian families, chiefly Servians from Austrian and Turkish dominions, became Russian subjects, and settled on the boundaries of Ukraine near the source of the Ingoolina region, which received the name of New Servia. The government of Catherine II. likewise endeavoured to people the southern fertile but uninhabited regions of Russia, by inviting foreign colonists to settle there, at the same time granting them certain privileges, and even help to pay their first domestic expenses. The invitation was accepted by several thousand Germans, who established themselves chiefly along the Volga, in the districts of Samara. Government likewise endeavoured to restore to Russia the Raskolniks (Schismatics) who had gone abroad. Those who returned were promised entire forgiveness. Besides, Raskolniks were no longer obliged to pay double taxes, to wear a particular dress, and to shave the beard. As for the 'Old Believers,' or adherents to old-printed church books in New Russia, at Potemkine's request they were permitted to have their own churches and priests, ordained by orthodox (Pravoslavni) bishops (1785). These 'Old Believers' thus formed the so-called 'Church of one Belief.'

## SCHOOLS AND LITERARY MOVEMENT

Regarding the measures adopted for popular instruction during the reign of Catherine II., much attention was paid to form a system of regular, permanent, general schools. In order to execute this plan the empress appointed a 'Committee for the Organisation of Popular Schools' (1782). According to the plan of the committee, it was purposed to introduce in district towns small popular schools for elementary instruction of children belonging to all classes, and in government towns to found 'chief popular institutions.' Projects were also formed to open several universities; but these plans were only partially executed. In a few towns, 'chief popular institutions' were organised, but not one university was opened.

It was principally General Ivan Ivanovitch Betzkii who was instrumental in promoting the advancement of instruction by founding schools. At his suggestion 'foundling institutions' were established in St. Petersburg and in Moscow. Betzki's efforts, too, obtained the commencement of private schools for women, such, for example, as that in the St. Petersburg Smolni monastery (for young ladies of noble birth, on the plan of the French institution of St. Cyr), in which education had a monastic character. The foundation of the cadet, the engineer, and the artillery corps augmented the number of military institutions.

Betzki also earnestly desired that Russians should be educated, in order that they themselves might instruct their children: for the latter could not regard foreigners as their parents; and foreigners, besides, were unacquainted with the popular customs and the religion of the Russians.

Notwithstanding the patriotic sentiments of Betzkii, however, the influence of French customs and literature on the higher classes of Russian society made great progress during the reign of Catherine II. That influence was chiefly remarkable in softening manners, while that was not a little aided by the enlightened views of the empress herself.

The executions which took place during the reigns of Peter I. and of Anna Ioannovna, as well as flogging with the knout and other hideous punishments of Elizaveta Petrovna's time, had begun to pass into traditions: and although torture was still employed in judicial interrogations, yet it was not to such an extent and not so cruelly inflicted as formerly.

Poroshine, one of the Emperor Paul's teachers, narrates in his *Notes* that once while dining along with his imperial pupil, the conversation chanced to turn on



the well-known affair of the cabinet minister Volinski. Nikita Ivanovitch Panine, chief tutor of the heir, remarked, that not long previously, he had read the trial, and that it nearly gave him paralysis, so strong was the impression produced by a description of the torments inflicted on Volinski! Another time, while at dinner, Count Panine, on comparing various reigns with that of Catherine II., gave the following example:—A general, who at one time was along with the hetman Razoomovski, was heard to say that ‘persons of the present day were mere milk-sops, impossible to scold; whereas formerly the stick was in full swing and none dared to say a word!’

Imitative literature made great progress during the reign of Catherine II., and chiefly flourished under protection of the court. Poets followed Lomonosov’s example and continued to compose panegyric odes. The representative of that class was Derjavine. A retired colonel’s son, his first learning was obtained at the gymnasium of Kazane. Then he began service in the ranks of the Guards, and eventually became state secretary of the empress. In heavy, sonorous, but expressive verses Derjavine chiefly sang the praise of Catherine under the name of ‘Felicia,’ and extolled the important events of her reign.

The representative of satiric literature at that epoch was the talented Von Veezen. In his comedies, especially those entitled *The Brigadier*, *The Minor*, *The Spoiled Child*, he attacked two visible defects of contemporary society. On the one hand, the unwise, purely outward imitation of French customs, with the total want of moral training; on the other, the rude manners and prejudices which noblemen inherited from Russian ancestors. Periodical literature, in form of journals during Catherine’s reign, had likewise a satirical tone.

The beginning of Russian journals in literature originated at the close of Elizaveta’s reign: and the first satirical journal, entitled *The Laborious Bee*, belonged to the well-known Soomorokov. But special progress in journalistic literature took place during the first half of Catherine’s reign, or between the years 1769 and 1775.

At that epoch there appeared a whole family of journals—*Each Sort of Everything*, *The Drone*, *The Infernal Soil*, *The Painter*, and others. The chief task of one and all was to show contemporary society its weak side. The attacks of journalistic satire were principally directed against two classes of individuals, *i.e.* functionaries who traded in the administration of justice by accepting bribes, and those who strove to shine by means of superficial education and fashionable European customs.

Among satirical works of the epoch we may mention the so-called *Letter-*



*Writer* by Koorganov, composed of original and translated anecdotes, witty proverbs, precepts, etc. *The Letter-Writer* was a continuation of previous collections, such as *The Bee*, and, towards the close of the eighteenth century, became a favourite book of the people. Koorganov was son of an under-officer, and for about fifty years served as teacher in the marine cadet corps.

Catherine II. herself took a lively interest in literary and scientific labour. She used to compose moral tales for children, dramatic pieces for her own private theatre (in the hermitage), and notes on Russian history. In order to promote scientific knowledge of the natural productions and inhabitants of her empire, Catherine sent expeditions of learned men to distant regions of the country, such, for example, as those of Pallas, Lepechine, Gildensted, and others. When the celebrated Princess Dashkov was named president of the Academy of Sciences in 1782, the academy began to issue a monthly journal named *Collocutor of Favourite Russian Words*, in which Catherine herself, as well as some of her courtiers and the best-known writers of the period, took part. Among the latter were Derjavine, Bogdanovitch, Von Veezen, Kniajnine, Kapniste, etc. The said journal, however, like others, soon ceased.

One of the most noble participators in the promotion of Russian enlightenment and literature during the second half of the eighteenth century was Nikolai Ivanovitch Novikov, who devoted himself to education of the middle classes of the people.

At first editor of several satirical journals, Novikov in 1781, along with Schwartz, professor of the Moscow university, formed 'The Friendly Learned Society,' whose objects were to translate and print books for the people, to sell the said books at the cheapest possible price, nay, even to distribute them gratis in order to aid the poorest who desired to learn. Many rich distinguished individuals contributed to the society, whose influence on the young generation was most beneficial. Guided by the 'Friendly Society,' Karamzine, the subsequently famous historian of Russia, completed his education. But, towards the close of Catherine's reign, literary movements and private societies were subjected to considerable restriction. (That originated from the anxiety caused by the French Revolution. Along with the unbelief and materialism of French philosophers of the eighteenth century, spread abroad in Europe, opposed to them was the mystical teaching of St. Martin and other idealists. At the same time the number of secret mason brotherhoods augmented. They were founded under pretext of benevolent aims. They likewise appeared in Russia, and even became fashionable there; but, when the French Revolution broke out, these brotherhoods incurred suspicion of harbouring various political

projects. Novikov, as a follower of religious mysticism of the Martinists and masons, did not escape such suspicion. He was arrested and shut up in the fort of Schlüsselburg (1772), but was liberated from prison by Catherine's successor.

Amongst productions of clerical eloquence at that epoch, we especially remark the sermons and other moral and religious compositions of three celebrated archbishops of the Russian church, *i.e.* Gregory Koniski, bishop of Bieloruss, St. Tichon, bishop of Voronej, and Plato, archbishop and subsequently metropolitan of Moscow.

As a specimen of the artless but powerful preaching of Tichon, we may mention his sermon preached on the following occasion. In Voronej, from ancient times it was the annual custom before the Petrovski Fast (in the month of June) to have a popular festival in memory of Yareelo, the heathen god of spring. The festival was accompanied by unseemly games, fighting matches, etc., and in general had heathen characteristics. In 1765, on the first day of the Petrovski Fast, Tichon appeared at an open space in the midst of an unruly crowd, and, by the force of his words, stopped the games. On the following Sunday he appointed a solemn service in the cathedral, and there pronounced to the people an exhortation which touched the very depths of their hearts. The above-mentioned festival was thenceforth discontinued.

Plato, from the Trinity cloister, where he was archimandrite, was summoned to St. Petersburg, and appointed teacher of religion to the Grand Duke Paul (Pavel) Petrovitch. Plato often preached sermons in the court church. After one of his sermons there the empress was deeply touched, shed tears, and exclaimed: 'Father Plato makes us all do whatever he wishes. If he wishes us to weep, we weep.'

Plato especially touched his hearers by his panegyric on Peter the Great pronounced on the occasion of a victory gained by the Russian fleet over the Turks (1770). (Ilovaiski, pp. 307-311.)

## CHAPTER XXX

### FIRST WAR WITH TURKEY, 1768-1774

DURING the reign of Catherine II., Russia greatly extended its boundaries by the restoration of Russian regions in the west, and also by Turkish-Tartar conquests in the south.

1768-1774.  
First War  
with Turkey.

Along with war against the Confederation of Bar in Poland, Catherine was also obliged to carry on a struggle with Turkey (1768-1774).

Excited by the French court and the Polish confederates, the sultan intimated his hostile intentions to Russia, because a gang of Little Russian Cossacks had burned the neighbouring village of Balta. Such was the trifling pretext which made him declare war. He ordered Obrieskov, the Russian ambassador, to be shut up in the castle of Seven Towers. The empress could not send a large force against Turkey: but Roomiantzev, who was appointed commander-in-chief, knew, even with small means, how to overcome many enemies. In reply to his request for reinforcements, Catherine simply said: 'The Romans did not wish to know the number of their enemies, but only asked where they were.'

The most glorious epoch of the first Turkish war was in 1770, when Roomiantzev obtained two brilliant victories over the Turks—the first on the banks of the Larga, where the khan's army of a hundred thousand men was dispersed; the second on the banks of the Kagoola, where the grand vizier's force of a hundred and fifty thousand men was defeated, while Roomiantzev had only seventeen thousand.

During the same year a Russian squadron appeared in the Archipelago, obtained a victory over the Turkish fleet, and burned it in the haven of Tschesme. In that action two officers, Spireedov and Grieg, especially distinguished themselves, although the chief commander of the squadron was Count Alexis Orlov. On the latter was henceforth conferred the surname of 'Tschesmenski.'

During the following year (1771), Prince Vasili Dolgorookov made a successful incursion in the Crimea. The war was prolonged for three years, and at length terminated by peace concluded in the Russian camp of Kotschook-Kainardji, near Silistria. By that peace, Russia obtained part of the shores at the Sea of Azoph and the Black Sea (Azoph, Kertsch, Kinbourn). To Russian merchant-vessels free trade was opened in the Mediterranean Sea. The Tartars of the Crimea, Boodjak, and the Kuban were declared independent of Turkey. The sultan was obliged to pay 4,500,000 for the expenses of the war (1774).

## CHAPTER XXXI

### THE PLAGUE—POOGATSCHEV

MEANWHILE, as Russian armies were gaining brilliant victories beyond the boundaries of the empire, in the interior not a little was suffered on account of

1768.  
1770-1774.

1771.



physical misfortunes and great popular agitation. The plague penetrated from Moldavia to Russia, and began to spread in Moscow (1771).

When Count Saltikov, chief commander of the capital, quitted the plague-stricken city, the superstitious people revolted and murdered the Archbishop Ambrosius, because he wished to remove the Bogolioobski image of the Virgin from St. Barbara's gate (Varvarski), where the people rushed in crowds and thus spread the infection. 1771—Plague in Russia.

Ambrosius Zertis Kamenski, then archbishop of Moscow, was an enlightened, well-educated man, who had gained the ill-will of the ignorant by the suppression of several abuses, especially by prohibiting the scandalous concourse of unplaced priests, hired to perform service in private churches. On hearing that crowds collected at the Bogolioobski image, Ambrosius ordered the pitchers for money to be sealed up, also the removal of tents where offerings were kept and sold. The archbishop even wished the image to be taken down. Hence the fury of the Moscovite populace and their massacre of him. Insinuations were likewise made that doctors had thrown poison into wells, and thus had occasioned the plague.

On September 16th, 1771, on hearing the archbishop's orders, the multitude exclaimed as with one voice: 'The archbishop is a godless man! He removes the treasury of the Holy Virgin! He also wishes to deprive the people of her defence! He has probably agreed with doctors to poison the people. Orthodox Christians willingly suffer from injustice of the administration. If there was no fumigating in streets and hospitals, the plague would long ago have ceased.'

The alarm-bell was thereupon rung. The populace began to run in a crowd without knowing wherefore. But soon an aim was found. Shouts were heard: 'To the Kreml! to the Kreml! Let us ask Ambrosius why he does not wish us to pray to the Mother of our Lord! Doctors throw poison into the wells!' All then rushed to the Kreml, to the archbishop's house; but they did not find Ambrosius, and began to demolish everything in his apartments. General Eropkine, with a force, succeeded in clearing the Kreml, and the rebels were obliged to retire; but next day they seized Ambrosius in the Donskoi monastery and killed him. After ruining two houses for quarantine, the rebels next proceeded to the Kreml, there to complete the devastation of the archbishop's house, and to plunder a merchant's cave under the Tschoodev monastery. In answer to exhortations of the chief commander, a prince of Georgia, and also to those of the brigadier Mamonov, stones were thrown. Then General Eropkine ordered his soldiers to fire on the drunken crowd. Above a hundred were killed and one hundred and forty-nine seized. The remainder took flight. It appeared that the rebels were chiefly composed of serfs, merchants, workmen from

manufactories, and 'Raskolniks' (schismatics). Count Gregory Orlov was likewise sent from St. Petersburg to subdue the agitation in Moscow. In October the number of deaths diminished; and in January 1772, government declared Moscow delivered from the plague. So the ancient capital became tranquil, but two years later the whole empire was convulsed by the so-called 'Poogatschevski revolt.' (Toloviev, pp. 323-324; Ilovaiski, pp. 311-313.)

We have already seen that subsequent to the 'troubled times,' the Cossacks twice rebelled against government: in the reign of Alexis Michaelovitch, under command of Razine, and, while Peter the Great occupied the throne, under command of Boolavine. After Peter, during the first half of the eighteenth century, in Cossack regions various pretenders appeared; but they did not succeed in creating open revolt. Finally, while Catherine II. occupied the throne, several pretenders had endeavoured to enact the part of Peter III. One of these individuals, mentioned by Chopin in his *Histoire de Russie*, was a Greek named Stephano. He endeavoured to excite the Montenegrins against Russia. Stephano, however, was pardoned and eventually admitted to Catherine's service. Meanwhile, both abroad and in Russia, strange reports were circulated that Peter III. was still alive. A fugitive Don Cossack named Emilian Poogatshev declared himself to be the deceased emperor, and took command of the Yaik (Ural) Cossack armies.

The Yaik Cossacks, a branch of those on the Don, became known in history from the commencement of the seventeenth century. They had the ancient organisation of a community. Fishing had always formed their chief wealth. Their central point was the Yaik fort. Peter I. placed them under jurisdiction of the military college and determined their service.

During the reign of Anna Ioannovna, the beginning of the Orenburg military line took place, *i.e.* a line of small forts along the Ural and its tributaries. These forts on the one side cut off the Bashkirs from the Asiatic steppes and confirmed them on Russia, and on the other formed hindrances to the incursions of the Kirgees. The garrisons were composed of Cossacks and old soldiers. Subsequently the Yaik forces were discontented with the restriction of their former freedom. They murmured and not unfrequently revolted. A revolt during 1771 was especially remarkable.

1771.

The Calmucks, roving about in the steppes of Saratov and Astrachan, irritated by the oppression of Russian officials, all of a sudden, to the number of thirty thousand tilt-wagons, moved beyond the Yaik, and went along towards the Chinese boundaries. The Yaik army was then ordered to pursue them, but would not obey, and killed General Traubenberg.



Severe punishment for these offences seemed, however, only more to irritate the Cossacks. At last, General Freimann, sent from Moscow, subdued the revolt by force of arms. The ringleaders were punished with the knout, while many others were exiled to Siberia or made soldiers. The previous Cossack administration was abolished and replaced by a commander of Yaik. Quietness, however, was not restored among the forces. 'There will be more yet!' exclaimed the pardoned rebels; 'we will shake Moscow also.' Secret conferences then took place in wayside inns and in lonely farmhouses. A leader alone was wanted.

At length, Emilian Poogatschev appeared. He had held much intercourse with the Raskolniks, and frequented their retreats in Vetka and in the Irgeesk hermitages. In 1772 he went to the Yaik, and persuaded the Cossacks to flee to 1772. the Kuban to the districts of the Turkish sultan. The forces of government then seized him, and he was sent to Kazane; but he escaped from it by aid of rich Raskolniks. Again he hid in farmhouses of the Yaik, and, after making agreements with several Cossacks, he openly assumed the name of Peter III. Some Poogatschev hundreds soon assembled around him and raised the standard of rebellion. A commences his revolt. detachment of Cossacks sent against him went over to his side. The fort of Iletzk was the first stronghold which capitulated to him without fighting. Its ataman wished to defend himself, but the Cossacks received Poogatschev with the ringing of bells, while bringing him bread and salt, offered in token of hospitality, according to the ancient Russian usage. Poogatschev then ordered the faithful ataman to be hanged.

The boundary forts, through treachery of the garrisons, began to fall into the hands of the rebels, while the commanders generally perished on the gibbet. But Orenburg and the fort of Yaik manfully maintained a siege. In all the country along the Volga there spread an insurrection of peasants, to whom Poogatschev promised liberty. To the insurrection of Cossacks and peasants was joined a movement of Raskolniks, especially numerous among the Cossacks. Poogatschev promised the Raskolniks 'a cross and a beard.' Peasants belonging to Ural manufactories and fugitive felons also joined the pretender. Different races of eastern Russia, such, for example, as the Bashkeers, the Calmucks, the Mordvii, etc., also revolted. In this wise was renewed the time of Stenko (familiar name of Stephen) Razine. Even in Moscow itself the lower orders were secretly agitated, and evidently awaited Poogatschev with impatience. The first movements of forces sent against the rebels were unsuccessful: the affairs of government, however, began to improve when General Bibikov was nominated commander-in-chief. But he soon died, and his place was filled by Count Peter Panine.



Meanwhile, the pretender burned Kazane, took Penza, Saratov, etc. Only with the greatest effort was this terrible revolt subdued. More than once defeated by Colonel Michelson, Poogatschev was finally surrounded by imperial forces, given up by his associates into the hands of government and brought to Moscow, where he was executed (1775).

## CHAPTER XXXII

### THE CRIMEA—SECOND WAR WITH TURKEY—THE CRIMEA ANNEXED TO RUSSIA, 1783

THE Crimean khanate, acknowledged independent by the peace of Kootschook-Kainardjisk, could not long maintain its independence and its inward tranquillity from the conflicting influence of Russia and Turkey. When civil discord began among the Tartars, and khans were deposed, Russia interfered with the internal affairs of the peninsula, and raised Shagine Girei to the throne. Persuaded by Catherine's agents, Shagine Girei soon abdicated, and was sent to live at Kalooga. The Crimean Moorzas (princes) took an oath of allegiance as Russian subjects. The Turkish sultan, after some hesitation, at last agreed that the Crimea should be annexed to Russia (1783). In this wise, a nest of robbers which during the course of three centuries had plundered and devastated Russian land was at length rendered harmless; and Russia attained its natural limits towards the south. The administration of the newly acquired province was confided to Prince Gregory (Grigorii) Alexandrovitch Potemkine, who assiduously laboured to organise the southern desert country, and founded several towns there, Herson, Ekaterinoslavl, Nikolaev, Sevastople.

At Potemkine's desire, the empress, in 1787, accompanied by a numerous and brilliant train of followers, visited Taurida. At Kanev (government of Kiev) she was joined by the Polish king, Stanislaw Augustus Poniatovski. Joseph II., emperor of Austria, also met the imperial suite. The surroundings of that journey, arranged by the powerful favourite Potemkine, were distinguished by theatrical characteristics. For example, when the gilt yacht of the empress sailed along the Dnieper, on its banks—hitherto desert and uninhabited—all of a sudden there appeared flourishing villages, crowds in holiday attire and troops performing exercises. All that was got up on short notice; and the people were assembled from distant spots. Meanwhile, Potemkine ordered heaps of goods to be brought from Moscow and other towns to Herson, in order there to open a magnificent bazaar. On returning, he arranged a manœuvre near Poltava, to represent the

1783—The  
Crimea  
annexed to  
Russia.

1787—  
Catherine  
visits the  
Crimea.

victory gained there by Peter I. over the Swedes. Descriptions of Catherine's journey to Taurida are to be found in the notes of the French and Austrian ambassadors, Count Segur and Prince de Lyne, both in the imperial suite. (Ilovaiski, p. 315.)

The weakness of Turkey occasioned the so-called 'Greek project' to be formed at the Russian court. In other words, the Turks were to be expelled from Europe, and a state was to be created, including Moldavia, Wallachia, and part of Bessarabia, under the sceptre of a Russian monarch. The names of Catherine's elder grandsons—Alexander and Constantine—seemed to refer to this project. It was specially favoured by Potemkine. Similar ideas regarding Turkey occasioned unity between Catherine and the Austrian emperor, Joseph II. They accordingly formed a close alliance. Then the Turkish court, excited by the English and Prussians, a second time declared war on Russia (1787).

The chief command of the Russian forces during the second Turkish war was undertaken by Potemkine; but his personal exploits were limited to the taking of Otschakov, after a difficult siege, which cost much. The glory of that war chiefly belongs to Soovorov, who performed many doughty deeds, the most remarkable of which were his victories at Foxhani and at Rimnik, from which he received the surname of Rimniski; Soovorov also took the strong fort of Ismail. But the 1788. Russian allies, *i.e.* the Austrians, were unsuccessful. Joseph II., instead of concentrating his force of two hundred thousand men and attacking the enemy, adopted a defensive system, and left different parts of his army along the frontier like a cordon.

At the same time, Russia was obliged to carry on a struggle at the north-west with the Swedish king, Gustavus III., who thought to profit by the war with Turkey, in order to take Finland from the Russians. The war with Sweden had variable success and was chiefly carried on by sea. The Russian admirals were Grieg, Tschichagov, and Krootz. The war terminated by peace, concluded in the valley of Verelsk (1790). Both states retained their former boundaries. During the following year, after Potemkine's death, peace was concluded with the Turks 1790. at Jassy, by which Russia obtained a tract of land between the Boug and the Dniester. Russia likewise confirmed its sway on the northern shores of the Black Sea. The death of Joseph II. and diplomatic interposition of England and Prussia 1791. —alarmed at the increasing power of Russia—occasioned the postponement of Catherine's further views on Turkey.

During the last year of the empress's reign there was war between Russia and the Persian shah, who attacked regions beyond the Caucasus under Russian protection. Count Valerian Zoobov was sent against Persia, and took Derbent: but



his progress was arrested by the empress's death (1796). Her successor terminated war with Persia. (Ilovaiski, p. 315.)

## CHAPTER XXXIII

### RESTORATION OF WESTERN RUSSIAN REGIONS—QUESTION CONCERNING DISSENTERS—CONFERENCE OF BAR

1763.

WHEN Augustus III. of Poland died in 1763, the question concerning the election of a new king divided the nobles into parties. Catherine II. desired to raise Count Stanislaw Poniatovski to the Polish throne. He had attained her favour when he was along with the English ambassador in St. Petersburg. Accordingly, Russian forces moved towards Poland. Frederick II. of Prussia also took the side of Poniatovski; thus his party gained the ascendancy.

After the election of Poniatovski, attention was turned to the Polish dissenters. In spite of the loss of Little Russia, towards the east, during the seventeenth century, the Polish clergy endeavoured by every possible means to convert the inhabitants of western Russia professing the Russo-Greek faith to that of the so-called 'Union' and to Romanism. When Kiev was finally added to the Moscovite state, western Russia lost its central point for the church. The progress of the 'Union' was henceforth greater, and, in the eighteenth century, among western Russian bishoprics only one—that of Bielorosskaia—still retained a Russo-Greek hierarchy.

The means used to convert the Russo-Greeks to the 'Union' were not the same as the Poles had formerly employed. For example, orthodox (Pravoslavni) priests were offended in every possible manner, and forced to join the 'Union.' If they resisted, proprietors gave their churches and parishes by violence to 'Union' priests. The Pravoslavni were not allowed to build new churches, or to repair the old ones already falling to ruin. In fact, the people professing the Russo-Greek (Pravoslavni) faith were purposely kept in ignorance, poverty, and oppression; schools for them were forbidden to be erected. Not only so; about the middle of the eighteenth century the Polish clergy had missionaries in south-western Russia, who, with the help of military detachments, by force took away Russo-Greek churches for the 'Union.'

Even churches of the 'Union,' too, were in a pitiful condition. When the Pravoslavni were sufficiently weakened in western Russia, the Poles next began to convert the 'Unionists' to Latinism. 'Unionist' clergy were exposed to open contempt, and viewed with envy the wealth and privileges of Romanist priests,



In the church-service of the 'Unionists' there were perpetual changes which resembled Romish rites. For example, there were visible altars, organs, the ringing of bells, etc. The 'Unionist' clergy began to cut their hair, to shave their beards, to wear the dress of Romanist priests, etc.

From the time of Peter the Great, the political influence of Russia was confirmed in Poland; and inhabitants there, professing the Russo-Greek faith, began to apply to the Russian government for redress against religious persecution. But representations of Russian ambassadors and residents in Warsaw in favour of the Pravoslavni remained nearly without result. The weakness of the Polish government rendered it unable to protect the oppressed from offence and violence. During the reign of Stanislaw Poniatovski the influence of Russia in Poland increased. Russian plenipotentiaries administered in Warsaw in the empress's name, and Russian forces scarcely quitted the boundaries of Poland. Then the question concerning dissenters assumed a more decided turn.

A zealous agent of that question was found in the Beelorooski bishop, George Konisski, previously archimandrite of Kiev and rector of the Kiev academy. In 1763 he presented to the empress a complaint against the persecution of the Pravoslavni by Romanists in western Russia. On the occasion of Catherine's coronation Konisski made an eloquent speech in which he compared the difference between the prosperity of the Russo-Greek church in the east, and its poverty and oppression in the west.

The Russian court thereupon—along with the Prussian—demanded of the Poles that dissenters, including Pravoslavni and Protestants, should enjoy the same rights and privileges as Romanists. But the Poles would listen to no concession in that respect. During the diet of 1766, when one deputy began to speak in favour of 1766. dissenters, he was nearly torn in pieces by his enraged associates. Then Catherine commissioned Repnine, her plenipotentiary in Warsaw, to form a confederation of dissenters. Accordingly, during the following year, two confederations were formed, one of the Pravoslavni at Słotusk, and another of Protestants at Torn. The diet, however, still continued inflexible. The most zealous upholder of the Romanist party was Solteek, bishop of Cracow. Repnine then used energetic measures. He ordered the arrest of Solteek and some others of the Romanist party (Zalooski and Rjevooski). Under convoy they were sent to Russia. The diet then became more yielding, and signed a treaty with Russia, to the effect that those who professed the Russo-Greek faith should have entire religious freedom restored. By the same treaty, Russia also promised to continue the existing order of things in Poland.

The condition of Poland was, meanwhile, a pitiful one. The Polish diet,

although possessed of legal power, generally terminated without any result, because the so-called *liberum veto* of each member had a right to hinder any resolution passed, or 'to tear the diet in pieces,' according to the expression of the times. This revocation was always pronounced by some petty noble, bribed either by Polish magnates or by foreign courts. Kingly power had even degenerated to so great a degree, that the sovereign himself could take no measure for the interior defence of the state, or for transforming antiquated political organisation. Meanwhile, the nobles enjoyed every right and privilege, while the lower classes were kept in a condition of ignorance and oppression. They thus remained alien to the political interests of the country. Administration was full of anarchy. The magnates were their own judges, and quarrelled with each other. As for the dignitaries of state, they were not ashamed to accept money in order to become the arms of foreign courts and to sell their native country. In such circumstances, the once powerful Poland became weak to the highest degree. For a lengthened period it had already depended on neighbours who coveted its provinces.

But Catherine's growing influence on Poland meanwhile aroused the suspicion of other states. Some Polish nobles—Krasinski, one of the Pototzkies, and the family of Poolavski—with the hope of French aid, formed a confederation in the Polish town of Bar. Its projects were to abolish the rights of dissenters and to remove Poniatovski from the throne (1768). Repine thereupon began military action. The confederates, badly armed and commanded by several leaders, each nearly independent of the other, could not withstand the attack of regular Russian forces. The latter were, notwithstanding, few in number; for at that time war was beginning with Turkey.

The Duke of Choiseul, prime minister of Louis xv., sent aid to the confederates, in the persons of French officers. Among the latter was Dumouriez, subsequently famous during the French Revolution. Dumouriez, in his *Mémoires*, gives a very bad opinion of the confederates. The unruly petty Polish nobles observed no discipline, drank to excess, robbed, made no difference between their own followers and strangers. The chiefs surrounded themselves with luxury, were at enmity with each other, while their enmity not unfrequently broke out into open contests. (Ilovaiski, pp. 318-321.)

#### UKRAINE

Beyond the Dnieper, in Polish possessions, the old national and religious hatred between the Pravoslavni and the Polish nobles at this epoch raged in all its fury. The Zaporog Cossacks and gangs of robbers once more appeared as the



terrible avengers of the oppressed lower classes. The chief leader of these marauders was a certain Maximus Yelesniak, a Zaporog and former lay-brother of the Tschigirinsk Matrenisk monastery. The abbot of that monastery, Melchizedek Yavorski, like George Koniski, was a zealous partisan of the Pravoslavni church against the 'union' and Romanists. Yelesniak assembled a large number of Zaporogs and robbers, and began ruinous incursions on the domains of the Kiev voevode, ravished many spots, including villages and noblemen's castles, put to death many petty nobles and Jews (1768). The most dreadful act of the insurrection was the so-called 'Oomanski massacre.' The town of Ooman belonged to Count Pototzki, who there kept a detachment of Cossacks for the defence of his property. But these Cossacks, guided by their centurion Gonto, went over to Yelesniak's party, took the town along with him, and massacred nearly all the inhabitants. The rebels then proclaimed Yelesniak hetman of Ukraine. His army was augmented by new crowds. The Polish government, occupied with the confederation, could send only a feeble force against him. To aid the Poles, Catherine ordered General Kretchetnikov to march forward. The revolt was then subdued, and the Cossacks suffered frightful punishment. But even afterwards, the Zaporogs nearly every summer made marauding inroads on Ooman. That epoch was known among the people by the names of Kolievshini and Palievshini. The latter word is derived from the name Paleia, one of the Little Russian colonels, known for his bitter enmity to the Poles, during the reign of Peter I.

Four years later, the Confederation of Bar was abolished. At that period, among the courts of Russia, Prussia, and Austria there was an agreement, the result of which was the first division of Poland.

#### FIRST DIVISION OF POLAND, 1773

Russia received the northern and eastern parts of White Russia. More than any other, Frederick II. of Prussia urged that division. During the same year (1773) appeared the celebrated bull of the Pope, to disband the order of the Jesuits. According to Catherine's will, that bull was not intimated in neighbouring White Russian provinces, and the order continued to exist there till 1820. In general, Catherine as much as possible aimed at liberating the Romanist provinces of her empire from the immediate influence of the Pope. With that intention she endeavoured to concentrate the administration of their churches in the hands of a special hierarch, and appointed as bishop of the Romish church in Russia the wise, enlightened Sestrentsevitch, who subsequently was promoted to the dignity of metropolitan.

First division  
of Poland,  
1773.



## CHAPTER XXXIV

## THE CONSTITUTION OF MAY 3, 1791, AND THE FALL OF POLAND

1791.

At this epoch a party was formed among the Polish nobles which endeavoured to effect great changes of government. These changes chiefly aimed at upholding the state, which tended to fall. At the head of this transforming party were Ignatius Pototzki, Malachowski, Kollontai, and other patriots. In spite of counter action from conservatives, the patriots really succeeded in proclaiming a new constitution, May 3, 1791. The crown was no longer to be elective in the house of Saxony. The king was to possess executive power. The *liberum veto* was to be abolished. At the same time, a decided movement took place against Russia, then at war with Turkey and Sweden. But these wars soon terminated.

Constitution  
of May 3,  
1792.

During the following year (1792), a confederation, formed of adherents to the former government, was assembled at Targovitz. Felix Pototzki, the great crown hetman Branitzki, and the entire crown hetman Rjevooski, appealed to Catherine for help; and Russian forces instantly entered Poland. The Polish government could not offer powerful resistance; while hope of aid from Prussia was vain. The Polish army, commanded by the king's nephew, Joseph Poniatowski, and General Kostiooshko, endeavoured to resist, but, after a battle at Doobenka, was forced to yield. Finally, King Stanislaw Augustus himself, on Catherine's demand, consented to the confederation of Targovitz. Thus the constitution of May 3 was abolished. Subsequently, the empress formed an agreement with the king of Prussia, and the second division of Poland took place. Russia for its share received the regions of Volhynia and Minsk (1793).

Second  
division of  
Poland, 1793.

At this period the Russian plenipotentiary in Poland was Count Seevers, formerly governor of Novgorod. To him was assigned the difficult task of urging the diet to cede districts already lost in reality to Poland by its second division. On this occasion an extra diet assembled at Grodno. After some hesitation, the members yielded to the demands of Seevers, and confirmed a decree authorising the cession of land annexed to Russia. But the diet obstinately refused to make any such convention with Prussia, to which had been assigned purely Polish land. In vain did the Prussian ambassador threaten to declare war. Seevers was therefore forced to adopt extreme measures. He ordered four of the most obstinate deputies to be arrested and sent out of Grodno. Whereupon the diet thought to maintain silence concerning the cession of land; and the famous so-called 'Dumb

Assemblage' took place. To all questions regarding a convention with Prussia the deputies remained completely mute. They then received intimation that they would not be permitted to leave the hall till they gave a decided answer. But the deputies still kept silence. During this interval the night was far advanced. At length morning came. Three o'clock struck. Finally the diet yielded, but at the same time protested against the extreme measures adopted.

The French Revolution, then in full force, withdrew the attention of western Europe from eastern countries. Soon the very existence of the Polish state was at an end.

Patriotic, secret societies, with the hope of saving Poland, raised an insurrection. It was hastened by the recall of the mild, enlightened SeEVERS. His place was occupied by IGETSTRÖM, a brave general, but not remarkable for great sagacity. The insurrection began in Craców, in March 1794, and thence quickly spread 1794. northwards. A commander and dictator was chosen in the person of General Thadeus Kostiooshko, who had participated in the North American war, and had then developed his military talent. The Russian detachment stationed in Warsaw was taken unawares, and lost two thousand men. But soon Russian and Prussian forces arrived, while the Polish leaders, one after another, began to be defeated. Kostiooshko himself was made prisoner at Matziowitz.

Kostiooshko, desirous to hinder the junction of two Russian corps—those of Soovorov and Ferzen—on the way to Warsaw, moved onwards to meet the latter, with a force of 8000; but, deceived by false information, saw before him a much more powerful army. Kostiooshko then withdrew to a spot called Matziowitz, on the right bank of the Vistula, and south of Warsaw. Shut up in that marshy, woody locality, he next ordered General Poninski to come with aid as soon as possible. Ferzen, without losing time, followed the Poles, and on September 30, 1794, attacked their camp from different sides. After a protracted, obstinate action, the Poles were gradually weakened, and still General Poninski did not come. Kostiooshko made a last desperate effort to wrest the victory from Ferzen's hands. At the head of chosen cavalry, he rushed into the Russian ranks; but, enfeebled by a wound, fell fainting to the ground. Some foreign writers state that the Polish hero then threw away his sword, and exclaimed: 'Finis Poloniæ!' (Ilovaïski, pp. 321-323.).

Covered by a mantle of grey cloth, the dictator was with difficulty recognised by the Russians. Several of the Cossacks immediately crossed their pikes, so as to form a stretcher, and bore the wounded man to the Russian camp. The victory was complete. Scarcely 1500 Poles succeeded in saving themselves by passing through the woods to Warsaw.

Subsequently, Soovorov, along with Ferzen, after terrible storming, took Praga, a suburb of Warsaw, and there the war concluded.

The leaders of the Polish insurrection withdrew to foreign countries. King Stanislav Augustus abdicated, and went to live in St. Petersburg, where he spent his last days. He died during the reign of Catherine's successor.

Poland was then definitively divided among Russia, Prussia, and Austria. The first received as its share Lithuania and the Polish vassal dukedom of Courland. The last duke of Courland was Peter Biron, son of Ernest Biron, to whom Catherine restored the duchy. Peter Biron renounced his rights in favour of Russia, and, in return, received a pecuniary recompense. (Illovaiski, p. 324.)

1795—Third  
division of  
Poland.

## CHAPTER XXXV

### PRINCESS TARAKANOVA

WE have already mentioned that although Catherine II. was naturally kind-hearted and inclined to clemency whenever she could exercise it, she, notwithstanding, never hesitated to commit a crime in order to get rid of a dangerous rival. In a word, she had gone too far to retreat, and her position was such that she was obliged either to crush all obstacles which crossed her path, or herself perish by them.

One individual who disturbed the empress's peace of mind was to be found in the person of the Princess Tarakanova, or Daraganova, who called herself a daughter of Elizaveta Petrovna and Alexei Gregorievitch Razoomovski.

Princess Tarakanova had a confused remembrance of her childhood. She had always lived abroad, and there all gave credit to her story. A report was also current that the Polish nobleman, Radzivil Charles Radzivil—a man of weak disposition and of varying principles—had carried off the princess from Russia to Poland, and thence to Italy, in order to act through her, as a political agent, against Catherine II. The Polish patriots, too, had the same idea. Accordingly, the empress commissioned her favourite, Alexei Orlov, to go to Italy, there to seize Princess Tarakanova, and to bring her to St. Petersburg.

The young person in question always wrote her name 'Elizabeth, Princess of Vladimir,' which especially irritated the Empress Catherine.

Andréev (p. 186) makes the following statements:—'In the *Notes* of the Abbé Gorani, it is stated that the Princess Tarakanova was the youngest of three daughters, by the marriage of A. G. Razoomovski and Elizaveta Petrovna. A young man, who also bore the name of Prince Tarakanov, subsequently lived in



Russia, and died in consequence of overturning some liquid on himself while making chemical experiments along with his teacher.'

Andréev credits the statements of the Abbé Gorani concerning Princess Tarakanova, and thinks that they agree with the date she gave of her own birth—*i.e.* 1745.

Alexis Orlov was of gigantic stature, and of remarkably beautiful personal appearance, in spite of a scar on his face, from which he was surnamed 'Le Balafre.' His strength was extraordinary. A silver tray, which he quite easily rolled up as a scroll, is still kept and shown as a curiosity in the arsenal at Tzarskoe Selo, an imperial summer residence near St. Petersburg.

Alexis Orlov used to squeeze an apple between his fingers; and on one occasion he, without difficulty, raised a wheeled conveyance in which Catherine II. was seated.

Alexis Orlov enacted a prominent part during the whole reign of Catherine. He survived her, her son, and died at an advanced age during the reign of her grandson. Participation in the events which preceded Catherine's ascension of the throne, the burning of the Turkish fleet at Tschesmé, the seizing of Princess Tarakanova in Italy, are the three chief events of Alexei Orlov's life.

We have already noticed the intercourse between Princess Elizabeth Tarakanova and Radzivil; but the latter was not one capable of conducting an intrigue. As for Princess Tarakanova, according to the testimony of contemporaries, she was a fascinating woman of the world, but at the same time one in whom feminine weakness predominated over ambition. True, she called herself the daughter of Elizaveta Petrovna, but that was only what she (Tarakanova) had been told by others, and herself believed. And even, although she styled herself 'Elizabeth, Princess of Vladimir,' she, notwithstanding, had no ambitious designs against Catherine.

It is said that Radzivil's estates had been confiscated on account of his intercourse with Princess Tarakanova; but that, on his return to Warsaw, he had an interview with Prince Repnine, who restored his estates on condition that he would break off all connection with the princess.

There is, however, no doubt that Polish patriots desired to make use of Elizaveta Petrovna's daughter as a political arm against Catherine II. Not only so: Andréev distinctly states (p. 87) 'that those who counted on Princess Tarakanova's influence were connected with Poogatschev's revolt.' If strange reports were circulated that even in St. Petersburg there were partisans of Poogatschev, it is evident that the Poles participated in it. Some of them were even found beside him.

Catherine, accordingly, became alarmed. Elizaveta Tarakanova might be dangerous. She was a rival, an obstacle which must be removed. Catherine, indeed, called the princess 'a liar and a vagabond'—'a liar,' because she called herself 'Princess of Vladimir'; 'a vagabond,' because she had always lived abroad in different countries.

While Elizabeth Tarakanova was in Italy, her surroundings were of the simplest kind, as her means were then very limited.

When Alexis Orlov went to Italy, he made the princess's acquaintance, and pretended to be in love with her. He also feigned great displeasure against the empress. The princess also returned Orlov's seeming affection. Whereupon a priest and other functionaries, dressed up for the occasion, performed a mock marriage; so that the princess imagined herself the wife of Orlov. But that all this was a mere sham there can be no doubt, because, afterwards, Orlov told the empress, 'that, if such was her desire, he was even ready to marry Princess Tarakanova.' (Andréev, p. 189.)

One day Orlov invited the princess to visit his vessel, then in sight of land. The princess went. While examining the vessel, the scene suddenly changed. Captain Litvinov advanced, and announced to the princess that she was arrested. To save appearances, however, Orlov was seemingly arrested also. The vessel then set sail, and transported both to St. Petersburg. There, a dungeon in the fort of Petropavlovsk awaited the princess. In spite of all exhortations to the contrary, she still continued to call herself Elizabeth, and to repeat previous statements regarding her origin. All this exasperated the empress. The captivity of the princess then became more and more strict. Interrogation followed interrogation. Sometimes an officer and two soldiers remained day and night in the princess's dungeon. Worn out, mentally and physically, she fell into a consumption. In that condition she had a son, afterwards known by the names of Alexander Alexéevitch Tschesmenski, who attained the rank of general in the Russian service.

According to report, when Alexei Orlov used to visit the princess, even the neighbouring guards overheard how loudly and bitterly she reproached him, while he sat silent and confused. From day to day the princess became weaker, so that at last her end seemed near. Then no more was known of her ultimate fate. Some suppose that she perished, drowned in her dungeon, during an inundation of the river Neva, in 1777, and when, of course, she was unable to save herself. That terrible scene has been represented in a well-known picture by Flavitzki. The princess is seen standing erect on her miserable bed. Near her, rats are also jumping up and trying to escape. The water is pouring through the prison-window, and has nearly reached the princess's feet.



Some have, however, supposed that Elizabeth Tarakanova died a natural death, from consumption, and was buried under the floor of her dungeon, henceforth surnamed 'The Alexéevski Ravine.'

At a later period, when every one had forgotten Princess Tarakanova, at the Ivanovski monastery in Moscow there lived an old recluse named Dosetheeia. She spent her time in the strictest retirement, while she occupied a large, well-appointed cell. She was rarely seen, for she could listen to the church service without showing herself. Sometimes very highly placed, important personages visited Dosetheeia. It was observed that Alexis Orlov constantly rode round one side of the Ivanovski monastery. Dosetheeia was an enigma to all the other nuns of the cloister. They did not know her, and were ignorant of her previous name. But on one occasion she herself spoke of her past history to G. I. Golovine. Dosetheeia then said that she had lived abroad, and had been brought to Russia. Golovine was at that time a young girl, but, had she known previous events, she might there have sought the individual said to have been interred in the 'Alexéevski Ravine.' At Dosetheeia's funeral the highest persons in Moscow were present. She lived till the reign of Alexander I., and died in 1810. On her tombstone was inscribed that she was born in 1745.

Alexander Alexéevitch Tschesmenski was merely called 'the pupil,' but not acknowledged as the son of Alexis Orlov.

The latter also lived to be old. His last days were chiefly spent in improving the breed of horses. The Moscovites surnamed, or rather nicknamed, him 'Aleehan.' Latterly, Count Alexis no longer participated in political events. (Andréev, p. 190.)

## CHAPTER XXXVI

### CATHERINE II. AS A WOMAN AND AN EMPRESS

'IN the lives of great and influential individuals, the trivialities of domestic life and personal habits are interesting, because they disclose much of the true character,' says Andréev (pp. 205, etc.).

Catherine rose at six o'clock in the morning, while all in the palace were still asleep. She dressed, without awakening any one, and herself lighted the stove.

A favourite maxim of hers was, 'Live, and let live.' Thus the empress strove to trouble those around her as little as possible. While the slumbers of those in the palace still continued, she began to write. 'It is impossible to pass a single day without writing,' said she to her secretary, Greebovski; and the remark was made when she had already attained advanced age.



In the morning, Catherine drank very strong coffee, which was latterly forbidden on account of the hurtful effect it had on her health. In fact, the full-blooded habit of body and the apoplectic stroke which occasioned her death were said to have been brought on by the constant use of such coffee. The small biscuits, eaten along with the coffee, the empress shared along with her favourite little dogs. Catherine was very fond of some small English dogs sent to her by Dr. Dimsdale. In general, she liked animals, and they liked her. A dog, in the same room where she was, always approached and lay down at her feet. Apes would jump on her shoulder. Parrots, shy of every one else, allowed her to scratch their heads. After a great fire in St. Petersburg, pigeons flocked in numbers to the palace. Catherine ordered them to be fed. This extraordinary woman is said to have fascinated human beings also. Thus it not unfrequently happened that enemies became her friends.

In the morning, Catherine received her secretaries, and listened to the communications of ministers. While they read aloud, she did handiwork of some kind, such as knitting or embroidering on canvas. But, according to Derjavine, during the latter years of the empress, she was so preoccupied with political plans that she scarcely heeded documents concerning the interior of Russia.

Catherine dined at one or at two o'clock. In general, three or four dishes sufficed for her. She never took wine. Only latterly, by the doctor's advice, she daily took a glass of Madeira. Her favourite beverage was currant syrup, mixed with water. After dinner, she either read herself, or Ivan Ivanovitch Betzki read aloud to her. Catherine did not like novels. Scientific works, both old and new, chiefly interested her. The empress sometimes played at billiards. In the evening, she frequently played at cards, her favourite games being Boston, piquet, and cribbage. In the evening also, the empress occasionally held receptions in the so-called 'Hermitage.'

In summer, the court removed to Tzarskoe Selo (*i.e.* imperial village), a residence in the neighbourhood of St. Petersburg. Andréev (p. 208) states that the name of the said residence was derived from a young girl called Sarat, who lived in an adjacent village, first designated as Sarskoe and then Tzarskoe Selo. There are two beautiful palaces in that locality; and tradition still preserves details concerning the dances of nymphs and Cupids in the woods, to the sound of music at Tzarskoe Selo. There, too, in one strange tower, a table suddenly appeared from the floor, and all sorts of delicate dishes were presented to guests. There was, likewise, a mysterious tree. While seated in its shade, the visitor seemed to be surrounded by sparkling fountains.

In intimate, chosen society, Catherine liked to be seen on a footing of equality with those present. Proud and majestic as an empress on the throne, notwithstanding, when in a small circle, she preferred to shine by mental attractions and those of a woman in high life, rather than by the mere outward advantage of rank. According to Chopin (in his *Histoire de Russie*), Catherine II., in private conversation, was the most charming of women.

She had no jester at court; yet she liked those who amused her. Such was L. N. Narishkine, an exceedingly witty, sarcastic man.

Catherine neither lunched nor supped. At ten o'clock in the evening she generally used to drink a glass of boiled water, and then went to bed.

Of middle height, but well-knit frame, Catherine possessed a remarkable amount of vital force. Her biographer, Soomorokov, declares that electric sparks sometimes issued from her silk dress, or from sheets she had used, and that on one occasion an attendant, who helped to dress the empress, after touching her body received a powerful shock in the hand.

In consequence of leading a mode of life so regular and moderate, it is not surprising that Catherine II. long retained a youthful appearance. Even at a period when many feel old age, she still rose early, although somewhat later than before; and she no longer dressed alone, but was aided by an attendant.

Concerning the personal appearance of Catherine II., opinions differ, and that is natural; for her mental qualities were so varied, that they influenced the expression of her features, and the latter seldom bore the same expression for a lengthened period. Richardson, who was in Russia in 1768, said that Catherine was prettier than any of her subjects whom he saw. Her smile had a peculiar charm. Her full, pleasant countenance retained much freshness till her death (at sixty-seven). Even after sixty years of age, Catherine was still wonderfully youthful. She had all her teeth. Her hands yet remained beautiful; but her sight had gradually weakened, so that she used magnifying spectacles in order to read. We have already mentioned the peculiar fascination Catherine exerted on many. 'Heavens!' exclaimed Derjavine, when, on one occasion, he presented a report to the empress. 'Heavens! who can withstand that woman?' 'Please your majesty,' continued he, addressing Catherine, 'you are not a human being! To-day, I swore to myself that I would not speak to you; but, against my will, you make me do what you wish.' 'Is that really true?' was Catherine's reply.

All those who served Catherine II. were happy. The secret is easily explained. She endeavoured to make their life easy. She had constant consideration for the feelings of others, and never needlessly occasioned pain. 'I praise with a loud voice, but I blame quietly,' was one of her favourite expressions. As can be

easily imagined, her kindness was often abused; and the cheating that went on at her court was simply fabulous. According to Andréev (p. 214), when only one hundred candles were wanted, one thousand two hundred were taken.

The portraits of Catherine differ according to the epoch at which they were painted. During her youth—prolonged far beyond ordinary limits—her features, combining majesty with an earnest desire to please, presented a most attractive study for a painter. Her eyes, of a charming grey, that appears black in the evening, had a brilliancy which escapes the artist, but varied the spell of her countenance. The forehead was large and open, the eyebrows lightly marked, the nose half aquiline, the mouth fresh and graceful. The chin, a little prolonged, became fuller as years advanced. The neck was of remarkable beauty. The hair, of a chestnut colour, was raised in the antique fashion, and admirably suited the general effect of the features. Catherine II. was of middle height; but the full chest made her appear much taller. Never was an air more majestic. Never was a forehead better suited to wear a crown.

We deeply regret that the private life of Catherine the Great is stained by immorality of the grossest description and by miserable intrigues of her favourites. We are likewise forced to blame her for the wealth she squandered on them. But unfortunately we remark the same extravagance in the history of other monarchs. Andréev (p. 215) truly adds that ‘at Catherine’s court her favourites were only in power while able to render service to their country, but never did their will predominate over that. Only Zoobov, with limited mental qualities, occupied the first place in the council; but that was when Catherine’s own powers were somewhat enfeebled. Ermolov, however, states that Zoobov knew Russia better than any of his contemporaries. In not a few cases Catherine confessed that she considered ordinary individuals only as playthings. She often appeared to be led by others, while in reality she obliged them to follow her own plans.

In writing to Catherine, the Prince de Ligne remarked truly: ‘Many speak of the St. Petersburg cabinet. I know not one of smaller dimensions. The said cabinet extends from one temple to another, and from the upper part of the nose to the hair.’

‘It was in the midst of her glory, beautiful still, that the great Catherine passed away, and before time had lessened the activity of her powers; she had not the mortification of outliving herself by attaining decrepit old age. It was in all the majesty of the throne that she descended to the tomb!’ (Chopin’s *Histoire de Russie*.)



## CHAPTER XXXVII

### CATHERINE'S INNER WORLD

FROM numerous descriptions given by others of Catherine II., and also from what she herself has written, we are enabled to form a pretty correct idea of her inner world, of her daily thoughts, of her literary occupations, of her political plans.

For penetration and flexibility of mind, Catherine II. was surpassed by few contemporaries; but her specially remarkable qualities were great ambition and love of fame. She used to say that had she been born a man, and had her lot been different in youthful years, she would not have spared her head in the first battle, while pursuing fame. At another time she remarked that had she lost only one of the thirteen American provinces taken from the English king, she would have fired a shot into her forehead.

That Catherine possessed much decision of character was well known to contemporaries. The Prince de Ligne affirmed that he verily believed that Catherine would not lose courage if even the whole universe fell to atoms around her. When already a girl of fourteen, she had dreamed of one day becoming autocratic-empress of Russia. During the space of twenty years she had gradually prepared herself for that position. Andréev states (p. 159) that on one occasion the Prussian ambassador Mardefeldt, while conversing with Catherine, was utterly astonished by her mind and enlightenment. He then said to her in French, 'If I am not quite stupid, your imperial highness will at last reign alone!' 'I accept your prediction,' replied Catherine, also in French.

Not only so: Catherine constantly put the questions to herself, 'When she had in reality obtained power, how would she make use of it in order to become worthy of her rank? How could she promote the interests of Russia?'

From her domestic unhappiness she found consolation in reading, and in preparing to occupy the throne of a Russian empress. The glory of Russia was henceforth her glory. She used often to say that she acknowledged only two nations in Europe, *i.e.* Russia and Great Britain. Unlike many other sovereigns of foreign origin, Catherine zealously endeavoured to become thoroughly acquainted with the language of her new country. She frequently remarked that Russ combines the riches of German with the euphony of Italian, and should therefore become a universal language. In writing to Voltaire she reminded him that his native tongue was poor compared with Russ, and that, in order to write French, one should be an author like him. As we have already seen,

Catherine was fond of writing, and wrote a great deal in Russ in different styles—remarks on history, comedies, tales, stories for children, etc. In the disputes between Lomonosov and the German members of the St. Petersburg academy, Catherine took the part of the former and always showed esteem for Lomonosov, although evil tongues whispered that he had written his Russian grammar while surrounded by bottles, and while he was tipsy. Soon after Catherine ascended the throne, she and the Princess Dashkov went to visit Lomonosov. They found him at work. The empress showed him every attention, invited him to dinner, and told him that there would be ‘tschee’—the famous Russian soup of cabbage.

Catherine II. likewise became well acquainted with the history of Russia. Peter the Great was the model she desired to imitate. His representation was on her snuff-box, which latterly she told one of her attendants to keep, when the doctor forbade her to snuff.

While looking at the portrait of Peter, Catherine confessed that she constantly asked herself the questions: ‘Would he have approved her actions? Would he have done so?’

Whatever the secret belief of the friend and correspondent of French philosophers in reality was, Catherine scrupulously observed all the rites of the Russo-Greek church. She conversed with Diderot, and yet was enchanted with the eloquence of Plato, metropolitan of Moscow, who, in answer to Diderot’s question, ‘Did he believe?’ made a talented reply from the text, ‘The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God’ (Psalm xiv. 1).

From Catherine’s letters we know that while in Kiev during a fast, she ate little else than potatoes.

When on her journey to the Crimea, she ordered a prayer to be offered up at Poltava to commemorate the battle gained there by Peter the Great. With her own hands she hung on his tomb a standard taken from the Turks at Tschesmé. It was Catherine who erected the magnificent equestrian monument in St. Petersburg, executed by the sculptor Stephen Falconet, in memory of the great sovereign. The inscription is ‘To Peter I.—Catherine II.’

The war-steed stands on a block of Finnish marble, weighing more than a hundred thousand poods (one pood=fifty English pounds). The block was originally still larger, but it was broken while being transported. To remove it was exceedingly difficult, and Andréev states (p. 220) that seven thousand roubles were offered to the individual who could manage to bring the block safely to St. Petersburg. Already had a hundred and sixty thousand roubles been spent on the transportation, when the immense mass of rock was nearly submerged while

being brought across the Neva. Belzki was intrusted with the care of transportation, and he was in despair. However, all terminated successfully.

According to Derjavine, towards the close of Catherine's reign she used to say that if she could occupy the throne for two hundred years, all Europe would submit to her sway. She used likewise to remark that she came poor to Russia, but had paid her debt to it, by leaving it the Crimea and Poland.

Catherine II. was, moreover, magnanimous. She knew how to forgive. We have already mentioned the wonderful art of fascination which she possessed; she actually made enemies become her friends. All seemed to be necessary to her in order to accomplish her plans. Melgoonov and Volkov, both in favour with Peter III., found occupation during her reign. Catherine was even far from wishing to be revenged on one who had previously loaded her with humiliation. We allude to Elizaveta Romanovna Vorontzova, the favourite of Peter III. Catherine gave her a sum to pay her debts, and afterwards took her daughter as a maid-of-honour. Catherine also subsequently placed Field-marshal Munnich near her person, although he had taken the part of Peter III., and advised him energetically to oppose her.

Catherine II. used to say that when an autocrat, she had never abused her power; but autocratic government she deemed the only means of keeping together the different people and races forming the Russian empire.

Catherine paid attention to literature as an amusement. She did not like romances. She, however, took pleasure in listening to narrations, and even herself wrote stories.

We have already mentioned Catherine's patience and perseverance in completing her own education; for she was ignorant on her arrival in Russia. She attentively read, page by page, the celebrated *Historical and Critical Dictionary* of Peter Bayle. Finally, she acquired wonderful proficiency in writing French. In studying Russ, too, her patience was unwearied. (Andréev, pp. 216-228.)

## CHAPTER XXXVIII

### TWO PERIODS—DEATH OF CATHERINE, 6TH NOVEMBER 1796

ANDRÉEV (p. 229) makes the following remarks:—‘Since the epoch when political life in Russia has assumed its present form, and has been more extensively developed, two entirely different periods are remarkable in the reigns of its sovereigns. The new emperor ascends the throne with the best intentions. At



first he is a model of activity. He only thinks of the good of his people. All his attention is turned to internal reform.

‘But suddenly a shock is felt. Some unexpected obstacle appears. A change takes place. Apathy ensues. Desire for thorough reform grows weaker, and, if the sovereign feels strong inclination for exertion, he turns it to external affairs—to war and conquest rather than to internal reform. This we especially remark when the representative of power is one initiated in independent action. Such was the case during the reigns of John the Terrible, of Paul, of Alexander I., and also of Catherine II. Peter I. forms an exception to the above remarks. He ascended the throne without any elevated ideal, and terminated his career without deviating from the one great plan he had formed—in other words, to bring Russia into the circle of European states.’

Andréev then notices the peculiar part often enacted by the heir to the throne of Russia. John the Terrible, in a fit of passion, killed his eldest son. Alexis, heir of Peter I., was put to death by his father’s commands. Peter III. (Feodorovitch) and Catherine II. were closely watched during the reign of Elizaveta Petrovna. So much was this the case, that at one time Peter begged Elizaveta’s permission to go abroad on pretext of ill-health. As for Catherine, we have already noticed how wretched she then was. The moral atmosphere which she also breathed was such that she gradually became depraved. Pope’s striking lines are singularly applicable to her—

‘Vice is a monster of so frightful mien,  
As, to be hated, needs but to be seen ;  
Yet seen too oft, familiar with her face,  
We first endure, then pity, then embrace.’

Catherine’s heir, Pavel Petrovitch, led a retired life at Gatchino (an imperial residence near St. Petersburg). He lived on a small income, and was far removed from the court.

Thus, standing as it were aside, the heir to the throne remarks all the mistakes of the actual government; and when in turn he, too, occupies the throne, he strives to avoid them. But years pass; the sphere which surrounded his predecessors influences him also, and gradually he becomes like them.

We particularly notice two distinct, entirely different periods in the reign of Catherine II. She occupied the throne during the lengthened space of thirty-four years; and, at the close of her life, she was no longer what she once had been.

At first she had eagerly desired the emancipation of the serfs; but she was

forced to abandon the project because it met with so much opposition from the nobles. She also had endeavoured to issue a new code of laws. The plan of this code, composed by herself and chiefly suggested by foreign authors, was replete with wisdom and humanity. As far as penal legislation was concerned, one important clause introduced was: 'That it was better to let ten guilty individuals escape, than that one should be punished unjustly.'

In a word, the plan proposed by Catherine II. for the new code was so liberal that her advisers were obliged to reject half of the original presented to them by the empress. Andréev states (p. 230) that in France Choiseul committed to the flames a copy sent to him in French.

But years produced a great change in Catherine. The French Revolution, with all its horrors, ensued. The death of Louis XVI. and of Gustavus III. of Sweden made a deep impression on the empress, and caused her to adopt repressive measures.

During the first years of Catherine's reign great efforts were made to promote economy in the expenditure of the state. The debts of Peter I. and of Anna Ioannovna were paid, as well as three-fourths of those left by Elizaveta Petrovna. In 1765, five and a half millions of roubles were economised. But gradually these efforts grew weaker. The magnificent prince of Taurida (Potemkine) introduced every possible luxury, and Catherine herself eventually spent enormous sums on her favourites.

Catherine, too, when she at first occupied the throne, was the friend of philosophers and literary men. Voltaire she used to call 'her good protector.' But, during her later years, the empress wished to know nothing of philosophers. Voltaire's bust was removed from its place and thrown into a corner. So was that of Fox. Washington, from being formerly considered by Catherine as a hero and the deliverer of his country, was finally changed into a rebel. Plato Zoobov, Catherine's echo at that epoch, also spoke against philosophers.

In fact, Catherine openly opposed the French Revolution. She intimated that she wished to hold no intercourse with a people who had executed their king. Accordingly communication with France was forbidden. It was decided to acknowledge the eldest prince of the French royal family as sovereign. Two millions of roubles were given by Russia in aid of the French princes. The Russian fleet, along with those of Sweden and England, cruised on the coast of France. Indeed, Catherine prepared for open war with that country during her latter years.

We have already mentioned Catherine's great ambition and excessive self-love. Both received a heavy blow by an event which occasioned the first

commencement of apoplexy, when the empress heard that the young king of Sweden, Gustavus IV., officially received in St. Petersburg as the bridegroom of the beautiful Grand Duchess Alexandra Pavlovna, had suddenly broken off the projected alliance. The attachment was real between Gustavus and Alexandra; but Catherine made the unreasonable condition that their children should profess the Russo-Greek faith. The king was therefore exasperated. Catherine's countenance changed on learning what had happened. The blood rushed to her face; and it is supposed that the blow thus dealt to her self-love occasioned her death.

The beautiful Princess Alexandra Pavlovna subsequently married Joseph, prince of Hungary, and died soon afterwards. Gustavus IV. of Sweden was also unhappy. Forced by circumstances to abdicate, he died in exile. He married Frederika, princess of Baden, sister of Louisa, known in Russia as Elizaveta Alexéevna, consort of Alexander I.

Andréev (p. 239) truly remarks:—‘Catherine II. was naturally ambitious and knew in what true glory consists. She desired to diffuse good and happiness around her. Thousands, eager to possess these blessings, flocked to her presence. Thus the millions behind saw not the light of that sun which shone only on a few; and Catherine was not genial enough to rise above the level of the adjacent crowd, and to let the rays of her good intentions and humanity shine on all.’

Catherine's last illness was sudden. True, she had latterly suffered from a swelling of the feet. Wounds on them had also ensued; and when they healed, that was supposed to have been the chief cause of her death. (Andréev, p. 210.)

But in general her appearance was so wonderfully youthful for her age that the Prussian ambassador Taubentzen, who saw her in April 1796—six months previous to her decease—wrote that she looked like one who would yet live for many years.

At Gatchino, near St. Petersburg, the residence of the Grand Duke Pavel Petrovitch and his consort Maria Feodorovna, news came on November 5, 1796, that the empress was dangerously ill. Pavel at once hastened to her. In the Winter Palace Catherine lay in agony, and with difficulty separated from life, only partially paralysed by the apoplectic stroke. Contemporaries affirm that Pavel manifested deep, sincere grief at the sight of his mother's hopeless condition. During more than thirty hours did the death-agony continue; for Catherine only expired on the evening of November 6. While the terrible struggle continued she tore all the linen which covered her. Her last piercing scream was heard even in a neighbouring house.



Catherine's remains had been imperfectly embalmed, and accordingly soon began to decompose. Notwithstanding they were shown, with all due pomp, to those who came to bid her a last farewell. The dead empress was clad in a sumptuous dress of silver brocaded silk, trimmed with costly Spanish lace. A crown was placed on her head by the new empress-consort Maria Feodorovna. Except peasants, all were permitted to approach to kiss Catherine's hand, and to say adieu.

The Emperor Paul desired at the same time to show every possible mark of respect to the memory of his late father, and that he, too, should be interred with imperial honours. By the emperor's command, the remains of Peter III. were therefore exhumed from their humble tomb in the cemetery of the Alexander Nevski cloister. They were then clothed in regal robes, placed in a handsome coffin, and exhibited along with those of Catherine. Both consorts were thus together committed to the grave. The inscription on their sepulchre is, 'Divided during their life: reunited after their death.'

The imperial regalia were on purpose brought from Moscow to St. Petersburg for the occasion of the interment, and by the emperor's express desire they were carried by Count Alexis Orlov and Prince Bariatinski.

It was then observed by those present that the usually arrogant, self-confident Alexis Orlov followed the funeral car with staggering steps, downcast eyes, and a countenance pale as death. After the funeral, Orlov received orders to quit Russia. He then travelled in Germany and in the south of Europe.

In Chopin's *Histoire de Russie* we find the following remarks:—'If Catherine II. usurped the throne of Russia she certainly in no wise usurped her surname—i.e. "the Great." But she merited it by conquests, by vast extent of territory added to her empire, by administrative genius, by reform introduced in judicial judgment, by enlightened protection of arts and sciences.

'Catherine would also be great in the characteristics of her private life if we could but separate the lightness of her morals from the real generosity, nobility, benevolence, devotion to the duties of a sovereign, combined in that extraordinary mind.

'Catherine did much for the present, but still more for the future. Her reign was in fact, and could only be, a magnificent continuation of Peter's great work. None indeed understood the reformer sovereign better than Catherine; and, thanks to their united efforts, Russia now occupies a primary position among European states.'

## CHAPTER XXXIX

## REIGN OF THE EMPEROR PAVEL PETROVITCH, 1796-1801—PAUL'S CHILDHOOD

IN Andréev's fascinating work, *Representatives of Power in Russia after Peter I.*, we find many curious details of the childhood and early youth of the Emperor Paul.

Immediately after his birth he was taken from his mother and totally appropriated by the Empress Elizaveta Petrovna. The latter showed sincere affection for the young prince. She surrounded him by a whole crowd of nurses, and at all hours of the day came to visit him. These nurses, however, told the child so many wonderful stories concerning the empress that little Paul, when he had attained the age of five years, used to tremble like a leaf whenever Elizaveta Petrovna approached him. Perhaps in consequence of the child's dislike to her, or because Elizaveta afterwards cooled towards Paul, her subsequent visits to him became fewer and fewer.

During Paul's infant years, the constant intercourse with ignorant, foolish, superstitious nurses produced the very worst effect on his naturally sensitive mind. Idle tales of house-spirits, witches, and apparitions had in fact so unstrung the nerves of the little boy, that in terror he rushed under the table when the door of a room was violently shut. Even after attaining a more advanced age Paul had a singular dread of storms.

The above-mentioned society of nurses had so prejudiced Paul against Nikita Ivanovitch Panine, who was appointed by Elizaveta Petrovna as the prince's tutor, that, for a whole month before the latter entered on his new duties, Paul cried bitterly.

Panine truly was stern and cold, though one of the most enlightened men of his time. He was, moreover, noble and generous. At a later period, when he received rich presents from the Empress Catherine II., he shared them with his secretaries, because he said they had aided him with his work.

Perhaps, however, Elizaveta Petrovna would not have chosen Panine as the tutor of Paul had she continued to feel her first affection for the young prince. But, as we have already seen, not only had that cooled towards him, but towards his father, Peter Feodorovitch, also. Thus there was even a report that she intended to disinherit the latter in favour of Ioann Antonovitch, and that he had been secretly brought from Schlüsselburg to St. Petersburg with the desire to know if she could name him her heir.

At a later period, however, there seems to have been attachment between the imperial pupil and his tutor, Nikita Panine; for while the latter was on his death-bed, Paul visited him and kissed his hand.

But in spite of Panine's strictness, Paul was in other respects much indulged. He had a separate court. A whole crowd of flatterers surrounded him. He had considerable sums of money at his disposal; and, very often, he was allowed to read books quite unsuited to his age.

Is it then astonishing that in his disposition there appeared peculiarities which might not have existed had his surroundings been different? This experience did not pass unheeded by the Empress Catherine in the education of Paul's sons, Alexander and Constantine.

Paul's nature was singularly sensitive. His most remarkable quality was imagination. He speedily seized ideas expressed by others, even while seeming not to listen to their words.

The history of the Knights of Malta produced a powerful effect on his mind. He constantly played at being one of the knights. The signification of dreams was also much observed by Paul, and he paid great attention to them. He, however, slept very soundly; so that on one occasion, while yet an infant and still in the care of women, he fell out of his cradle without awakening. Very often what Paul imagined he supposed actually to exist. Nervousness and a certain precipitation of character were perceptible in him, along with inconstant impressions. Sometimes he would suddenly become attached to certain individuals, and then, without visible cause, he cooled towards them. After rising in the morning, he dressed hastily. He was annoyed if obliged to wait long for food. At table he used to swallow large pieces of food in order to finish dinner faster. He was very fond of masquerades, and, before they began, he would look repeatedly at his watch during a single hour.

It is necessary to become acquainted with the peculiarities of Paul's disposition, and to combine them with his physical individuality. Indeed, we can only regret that there was no one beside him to attend more to his bodily condition. For example, he was punished by being forced to eat what he disliked; and if he was ill afterwards, that was attributed to his habit of swallowing large pieces of food improperly masticated. Medical science has long since proved that an excited imagination is connected with deranged digestive organs.

Paul was a lively child, with expressive features. He was constantly in movement, and liked to run and spring. Andréev (p. 244) affirms that in general there was much similarity between Paul and his father Peter III.



Paul began to read very early, and especially he learned much by heart; too much, some thought, and blamed Panine for it, as the young prince's studies had commenced under his direction. Paul, however, forgot all he had thus learned, after a severe illness he had while the court was in Moscow in 1763.

The young prince had, notwithstanding, a very ingenious mind, which appeared on many occasions. Once it happened that Osterwald, his teacher of history, while enumerating the successors of Ninus along with Paul, counted thirty sovereigns, not one of whom possessed any good quality. After the lesson, five water-melons were sent by the empress. All were cut, but only one was suitable. 'See!' exclaimed Paul, 'among thirty sovereigns there was not one estimable; and among five water-melons, there is at least *one* good!'

Paul knew history thoroughly. Mathematics he learned tolerably well, thanks to the influence of another tutor named Poroshine. The young prince disliked German, and only learned it partially. Paul often spoke French; but he laughed at those whose conversation was a mixture of French and Russ. Paul's dislike to German was attributed also to Poroshine's influence; for, in general, Paul not unfrequently adopted and repeated the remarks of others. Poroshine tried to insinuate that Paul was one of the Romanov dynasty, as grandson of Peter the Great.

Efforts were made to correct Paul's faults by appealing to his self-love. Letters were shown to him, said to have been written by strangers, who affirmed that in Europe judgment was pronounced concerning the life of the heir to the Russian throne, and other particulars connected with him.

Paul had naturally excessive self-love. Once, at the theatre, he was displeased because, in the parterre, the spectators began to applaud without a previous sign from him. But, on the other hand, even when a child, Paul was disgusted with the flatterers at court. On one occasion, when they applauded him before he even began to dance, he exclaimed, 'Oh! the court! the court!' But, in spite of an unusually lively imagination, Paul did not like the theatre. He used to say that he liked retirement, and that, had he been a girl, he would have become a nun in the Smolna monastery. At one time, in his own apartments, he even formed what he styled the 'Pavlovski cloister,' of which Panine was the prior and Paul himself a monk perpetually on duty.

'Paul was naturally generous, and had one of the kindest hearts in the world. He gave with perfect grace, especially when there was question of atoning for any injustice. He never forgot his old nurses, and they, in turn, kept locks of his hair as sacred relics.' (Chopin's *Histoire de Russie*.)

Once, while dressing, he saw an earwig creeping on the floor, and could not

refrain from screaming in order to save it from being crushed. At twenty-seven years of age Paul shed tears on separating from his guardian, Saltikov. When Paul was already emperor, he, from personal conviction, wrote to Sonine, governor of Riazane, concerning an unhappy woman accused of having secretly interred her dead-born child. Paul insisted that she should not be given up to judgment, and added that the event alone was sufficient punishment for her.

Chopin, in his *Histoire de Russie*, narrates that when Paul ascended the throne he himself went to visit the Polish hero, General Kostiooshko, in prison, told him that he was free, and offered him a high position if he would enter the service of Russia. That, however, Kostiooshko declined from conscientious motives.

Paul was hasty, but his anger soon passed. He used to ask Poroshine's pardon after they had a quarrel. On a nature like that of Paul much could be effected by kindness, while, on the contrary, severity only produced obstinacy. Once at table Paul was so stubborn that Saldern remarked to those present, 'C'est une tête de fer!' Paul was then sent out of the apartment. 'In spite of all the good qualities of your imperial highness, you may make yourself hated!' exclaimed Poroshine, exasperated beyond endurance. Perhaps the expression was too harsh; but such words touched the sensitive mind of Paul, and taught him to amend.

In general, in Paul's disposition there was much that promised well. What was amiss might have been corrected by a judicious education, and especially by good example. But, if his intellectual culture was good for the times, as far as his moral training was concerned there was much to be desired. His physical training was so imperfect that the mistakes of his teachers were but too evident. (Andréev, pp. 240-247.)

## CHAPTER XL

### THE CROWN PRINCESS NATALIA ALEXÉEVNA

As a little child we have seen that Paul had a passionate, sensitive nature. In the apartments of the Empress Elizaveta Petrovna, where he lay in his cradle, he was carefully covered with down quilts and fur. Indeed, the numerous nurses, among whom he spent his early years, coddled him like an enervated hothouse plant. He was physically developed very early. From his naturally strong imagination, romantic stories made much impression on him at eleven years of age, and even earlier. When a boy of ten he used to write on the window-panes the name of the maid-of-honour who pleased him most.

Catherine II. was far from discouraging such sentiments in Paul. On the contrary, she used to ask him to tell her, as a great secret, which of her maids-of-honour he admired. But although Paul could not conceal such sentiments from his teacher, the young prince, notwithstanding, avoided talking frankly to his mother. So he merely answered her question by replying, 'All are the same.'

Let us, however, not forget that even from his earliest years Paul never seemed to feel at ease in the society of his mother. Poroshine remarks in his *Notes* that, although in general Paul played well at billiards with others, he always played badly with Catherine. At a later period, foreigners at the Russian court used to observe that Paul, in his mother's presence, seemed as before a judge. As for the maids-of-honour, on seeing the indulgence with which Catherine was disposed to view any preference of her son, they resolved in turn to profit by circumstances, and were rather free in their intercourse with the young prince. They used to wink from the windows at 'dear Pooniooshka,' as they styled him, and were sometimes much offended if he did not dance with them but with others.

Catherine, at an early period, began to seek a suitable bride for Paul. Her confidential agent, Asseburg, already had visited one German court after another, in order to make a choice for the heir to the Russian throne. Among many princesses whom Asseburg saw, one seemed to please him especially. She was Dorothea of Würtemberg. Her age, however, did not admit of a choice, for she was then only ten years old. But the Baroness Oberkirch—Princess Dorothea's friend of childhood—remarks in her journal that when ten years of age Dorothea already appeared fifteen, so much was she physically developed. Dorothea was subsequently the Empress Maria Feodorovna.

At length, however, Asseburg's attention was specially turned towards Princess Wilhelmina of Hesse-Darmstadt; and, after much hesitation, she was eventually chosen, though Catherine greatly preferred Dorothea of Würtemberg, and would have selected her if possible. Catherine was particularly charmed by the expression of goodness so remarkable in the portraits of Dorothea. Meanwhile, the choice of Wilhelmina of Darmstadt was greatly favoured by Frederick II. of Prussia. The landgravine of Darmstadt and her three daughters were accordingly invited to St. Petersburg. Eighty thousand gulden were assigned from the Russian treasury for the expenses of the journey. So Princess Wilhelmina of Darmstadt was chosen. She was united to Pavel Petrovitch, and was henceforth known in Russia by the names of Natalia Alexéevna. But her married life was of short duration. At first, all seemed to smile on her. Catherine, not unfrequently at discord with her son—chiefly from the intrigues of Panine and Potemkine—during the first



period after Paul's marriage became more cordial with him. The large and small courts grew intimate. Nikita Panine and Potemkine made peace for a time. Indeed, Catherine used to say that her daughter-in-law had restored her a son. But peace and union did not long continue. A struggle again began between Panine and Potemkine. Potemkine was jealous of Paul's influence on Catherine, and endeavoured to keep him removed from business. Panine, on the contrary, who had acquired and still possessed influence on his former pupil, maintained that, as the latter was of age at that epoch, he should accordingly participate in affairs of state. That naturally produced distrust in Catherine. A clever, ambitious young daughter-in-law, too, might become dangerous, if Panine's suggestions were followed. It also seemed to Catherine that she had discovered some of Natalia's secret thoughts. Reports were even current that the crown-princess endeavoured to be popular with the people. Catherine remembered the part she herself had enacted towards her husband, and grew alarmed. Meanwhile the proud, independent spirit of Natalia was not such as to allow of any explanation, if she considered her own cause just. The retired life led by the Grand Duke Paul and his consort did not dispel the doubts entertained by the large court. Saving young André Kirilovitch Razoomovski, few frequented the society of Paul and Natalia. The latter had, moreover, acquired much influence over the sensitive nature of Paul, from her cleverness and decided disposition.

Castera insinuates that Catherine was also jealous of the favour which the young grand duchess showed André Razoomovski, and did not hesitate to make injurious remarks to Paul concerning his consort. She, in turn, felt indignant at unworthy suspicion of her, and thought of retaliating on her mother-in-law.

But all misunderstanding terminated by an unexpected, sad event, *i.e.* the death of Natalia Alexéevna at the birth of her first child.

Castera, in his *Life of Catherine II.*, again states that the empress committed another crime, which occasioned the untimely demise of Natalia. Chopin, however, in his *Histoire de Russie*, does not confirm the statement. He does not even mention it.

Andréev (p. 254) makes the following remarks concerning the hapless young princess:—

‘Similarity of names has little signification in history. Notwithstanding, we cannot fail to observe that in the disposition and fate of the second Natalia Alexéevna, who died during the eighteenth century, there is something in common with the first daughter of Alexis Petrovitch and granddaughter of Peter the Great. The mind of both princesses was soon developed. Both desired to benefit

those dear to them. The mind of both was an obstacle to the selfish calculation of others. Both faded early in life, scarcely mourned by the persons they wished to sustain, and were followed to the grave with indifference by individuals to whom the untimely fate of the two young princesses opened up the way.'

Thus Paul, while still in early youth, became a widower.

## CHAPTER XLI

### THE EMPRESS MARIA FEODOROVNA

By a strange turn of destiny it eventually happened that the princess who at first had pleased Catherine more than any others, at last became the consort of Paul Petrovitch.

Natalia Alexéevna died; and it was unnecessary to hesitate concerning his second wife. She was already chosen by Catherine—*i.e.* Dorothea of Würtemberg.

Princess Dorothea was born in 1759, and brought up at the parental castle of Montbeliar in Würtemberg. She had eleven brothers and sisters. The family was related to Frederick II. of Prussia; and by his special desire Dorothea was brought up in the Lutheran faith, although her father was a Romanist. Dorothea's mother was unwilling that her children should adopt French customs, which at that epoch were gradually progressing in German courts, and in the higher circles of society. So Dorothea's governess was German—Frau Hendel, a rigid, reserved personage. At a later period, when Dorothea was already hereditary grand duchess of Russia, she wrote to the friend of her childhood, Baroness Oberkirch: 'Kiss the dust from the slippers of Frau Hendel!'

From Frau Mökler—wife of her brother's tutor—Dorothea had already heard much concerning Peter I. and Russia. For Frau Mökler was born Baroness Lefort—descended from François Lefort, the teacher and friend of the great sovereign.

According to Baroness Oberkirch, from early childhood Dorothea took a wonderful interest in the country destined to become her future home. Baroness Oberkirch also remembered how Dorothea used on purpose to sneeze while trying to pronounce a very difficult Russian name, and that by so doing she caused shouts of laughter to proceed from her younger brothers and sisters. 'But, fortunately,' added the baroness in a playful tone, 'the gentleman who bore the said family name died before Dorothea's wedding, otherwise he might have occasioned her a constant cold in the head!'

Indeed, Dorothea had heard so much concerning Russia, that when at last there was question of her marrying a Russian prince, she accepted the proposal as the appointment of fate, and rejoiced at the brilliant future awaiting her. But her childish gladness was sometimes also overshadowed. 'Terrible misfortunes frequently happen to sovereigns,' exclaimed she. 'Who knows what destiny has assigned to me?' But the sadness soon disappeared. Dorothea and her friend then began to practise bowing before the armchairs, as at a state reception, in order not to appear to disadvantage at Catherine's court. 'I dread Catherine,' said Dorothea; 'she terrifies me. I am sure she will think me very stupid. Oh, if I could only please her and the grand duke!'

As we have already mentioned, Catherine was attracted by the expression of goodness remarkable in Dorothea's portraits. Corberon said of her that she would simply remain a woman and nothing else. Dorothea's nature was indeed essentially feminine. She was fond of children, and especially she delighted in flowers. In appearance, too, she was comely. So, when she reached St. Petersburg, she could scarcely fail to please Pavel Petrovitch. Andréev, besides, remarks (p. 256) that portraits, in general, gave an imperfect impression of Dorothea's features. Thus, among five likenesses of her, taken soon after marriage, only one was tolerable. As empress, she retained her youthful appearance and freshness, even at fifty, according to the testimony of living witnesses. This was doubtless favoured by her most remarkable characteristics, *i.e.* an equal temper, great patience, love of order in all.

Catherine felt attracted towards the portrait of Dorothea at twelve years old, and begged that she and one of her brothers and sisters might be sent to St. Petersburg, in order to educate and establish them. That was the case when another princess was already chosen as the bride of Paul. But fate decreed that Catherine's first desire should be granted. In other words, Dorothea was in St. Petersburg, not as the ward of Catherine, but as consort of the hereditary grand duke. Henceforth Dorothea was known in Russia by the names of Maria Feodorovna.

The newly married pair lived in great concord. We, moreover, learn from the letters of Maria Feodorovna to the Baroness Oberkirch, that for several years subsequent to the union of Paul and Maria, they still continued to look on each other with lovers' eyes.

From Maria Feodorovna's natural disposition, she could not fail to be a devoted, loving mother. She could with difficulty be persuaded to separate from her children when it was decided that she should go abroad with her husband.



While in Paris, some observations of Paul concerning the French are interesting. On one occasion, among the surrounding crowd he heard the remark made that he was ugly. 'Although the French are polite,' said Paul, addressing the Russian ambassador in Paris, 'yet it is impossible to deny that they speak very frankly.'

Paul was charmed with Queen Marie Antoinette; so much so that Maria Feodorovna felt a slight shade of jealousy, according to the testimony of Baroness Oberkirch.

As a devoted mother, Maria Feodorovna, of course, wished to educate her children herself, but Catherine's will was that they should be brought up beside her, in St. Petersburg, and under her special observation. That, however, was in no wise because she disliked her daughter-in-law. But subsequently, when Maria Feodorovna was already mother of grown-up children, in order to see them she was obliged, several times a week, to drive over a very bad road from Gatchino to St. Petersburg. In Maria Feodorovna's domestic life all was, moreover, far from being a thornless path. The sum of thirty thousand roubles (assignment) was a scanty pittance for the hereditary grand duke of Russia, and for the maintenance of his court. Besides, Maria Feodorovna often accompanied her consort on horseback to military exercises during severe cold. In 1788 Paul himself, in a document destined to be published in the event of his death—when there was question of his being appointed to active service in the army—thanked Maria Feodorovna for her patience.

In subsequent chapters we shall, however, often have occasion to mention this empress.

## CHAPTER XLII

PAUL ASCENDS THE THRONE, NOVEMBER 6, 1796

PAVEL PETROVITCH was born September 20, 1754. Of his childhood and early youth we have already given details.

From the retired life he led at Gatchino and his secluded position there, he had ample time and opportunity to remark the mistakes of the actual government. Thus, on ascending the throne, he showed the utmost zeal in promoting reform.

One of his first decrees seems as a sort of protest against the ambition of his mother. In other words, women are excluded from succession to the throne, or, at all events, till male posterity becomes extinct. The male descendants of princesses may, however, lay claim to succession, if none of the elder line yet remain.

At a later period the Emperor Nicholas I. repeated and confirmed these regulations. Not only so: all princes of the imperial family, on coming of age, are obliged to take a solemn oath that they will in no wise disregard the established laws of succession to the throne of Russia.

As Paul himself, while grand duke, had often experienced embarrassment from a limited income, he likewise decreed that a suitable maintenance should be assigned for members of the imperial family.

At the commencement of the new reign, in several districts many peasants, deceived by false reports of liberty, refused to obey their proprietors, and were only subdued by armed force. However, soon afterwards a manifesto was issued to forbid any from forcing peasants to work on holidays. During the course of a week proprietors might also only exact three days' labour from their serfs (1797). In 1798 it was forbidden to sell peasants in Little Russia apart from land. These measures, of course, tended to limit the power of proprietors. In general, in administration of rural affairs Paul completed the institutions of Catherine, but in some of them he made considerable alteration. Besides, in consequence of new political theories which then agitated the west of Europe, youths were no longer permitted to be sent abroad for education. In compensation, the nobles of the Baltic provinces were, however, allowed to open a university at Dorpat (now Youriev), 1799.

At this epoch, also, private printing-presses were shut. New regulations concerning censorship were issued, and stricter inspection of the printing of books took place. Only those works in which there was nothing against the Russo-Greek faith and the Russian government were allowed to appear in print.

The union of the so-called 'Old Believers' to the national church, begun during the reign of Catherine II., continued while Paul occupied the throne; and a right to have their own places of worship was extended to all bishoprics.

The individual chiefly instrumental in promoting these measures was Plato, the wise, enlightened metropolitan of Moscow.

## CHAPTER XLIII

### SOOVOROV'S ITALIAN CAMPAIGN, 1799

So far as the external policy of the Emperor Paul was concerned, he at first earnestly desired to maintain peace, for Russia was already enfeebled by previous war, and therefore required rest.

Paul likewise turned special attention to the finances, which, after Catherine's

decease, were in deplorable disorder. With a view to correct the currency of paper money, the emperor ordered several millions of so-called 'assignation roubles' to be burned in his presence.

Paul put a stop to the military preparations commenced by Catherine against the French Revolution, but two years afterwards the constant extent of French conquests induced the emperor to conclude an alliance with England and Austria against France.

The command of the forces sent to Italy to aid the Austrians was given to Soovorov. The latter, at the commencement of Paul's reign, had lost the new sovereign's favour.

Paul was exceedingly fond of military service. He was unwearied in making efforts to organise the army. In it he introduced strict discipline, along with the Prussian fashions of powdered curls, shoes, etc. All these innovations were highly distasteful to old Field-marshal Soovorov, who had been accustomed to administer the affairs of his own army in a very different and in a totally independent manner. Thus he asked his demission and obtained it.

On receiving a small stick, by which the cues and curls of the soldiers were to be measured, Soovorov exclaimed: 'Hair-powder is not fit for cannons! Curls are not firearms! A cue is not a short sabre! I am not a German, but a born Russian!'

These words, repeated to Paul, led to a misunderstanding between him and the field-marshal.

Soovorov then resided at his own estate in the government of Novgorod and in the district of Borovitzk.

Subsequently, however, at the epoch of Soovorov's famous 'passage of the Alps,' Paul acknowledged all the merits of the great commander, and said that any ordinary reward offered to him was too little, as he should be an angel!

In a previous chapter we have noticed some of Soovorov's eccentricities. Indeed, he did nothing like any one else, and totally rejected the established rules of society. His speech was laconic. He used enigmatical expressions. He had phrases of his own. He twisted himself, made faces, and jumped about while walking. Very often the field-marshal would interrupt conversation with ministers and officers concerning the most important affairs, in order to mention his own domestic servants or his cook. Suddenly, too, Soovorov would break off a conference, run about the room, or hop on one leg. When Soovorov adopted the military calling, he continued to lead a life Spartan-like to the highest degree. He rose at dawn, ran about the camp in his shirt, crowed like a cock, and dined at eight o'clock in the morning. In dress, too, he had his own peculiar



fashions. He had likewise his own system of intercourse with subalterns. Strict towards each in the fulfilment of duty, he, at the same time, was not afraid of becoming intimate with the soldiers (Soloviev, p. 360). Soovorov jested with them, and amused them by his original remarks. In conversing with subordinates, he demanded candour and courage, together with prompt, exact answers. The words, 'I do not know,' were totally forbidden. When Soovorov suddenly turned to an officer or a soldier with some absurd question or remark, it was absolutely necessary to answer in the same tone. He who gave a quick, witty reply was deemed a wise, good fellow, while any who became confused and mute were called ignorant. Soovorov thus gained his ends. First of all, numerous anecdotes of him reached the Empress Catherine; and, secondly, he obtained immense popularity among the soldiers, who esteemed him as one of themselves.

After Soovorov's demission, and while he resided at his own estate, he there also continued to lead a most original mode of life. He used to sing in the choir during church service, or read the New Testament there; he rang the bells, and played with the village boys. But as he was in disgrace, he was under the inspection of the police. That, however, did not prevent him from keeping a strict eye on political events then passing in Europe. This occurred while Paul occupied the throne.

Towards the close of Catherine's reign, Soovorov was appointed to command an army sent to aid Austria against France; but the empress's death altered these plans.

In spite of Soovorov's eccentricities, he was well versed in several sciences, and knew nearly all European languages. One Russian author, Kaeedanov (pp. 409-410), affirms that there was much in Soovorov which none understood, and that the cruelty for which he was generally blamed has been greatly exaggerated.

The disfavour into which Soovorov fell at the commencement of Paul's reign was, notwithstanding, only temporary. Suddenly circumstances changed. By the desire of Francis, emperor of Austria, Paul appointed Soovorov commander-in-chief of the combined Russo-Austrian armies, and the old man gladly accepted the appointment.

The Italian campaign rendered Soovorov's name famous. But the fruits of 1799. his brilliant victories in Italy (on the banks of the Adda, the Trebia, and at Novi) were frustrated by the unwise measures and the envy of the Austrian war-council. After accomplishing the unexampled passage of the Alps into Switzerland, Soovorov retired to Bavaria.

After the victory at Novi, Soovorov received orders from northern Italy to march towards Switzerland, in order to change the force of the Archduke Charles and to join the Russian corps of Reemski-Korsakov. But, on seeing the gigantic Alps and their threatening chief, St. Gothard, the Russian troops were dismayed. The difficulty of the enterprise terrified even them, in spite of all their courage. Murmurs then broke out. On observing them, Soovorov ordered a ditch to be dug, and added in a decided tone: 'Here let me be buried. I cannot outlive my fame. You are not Russians. You are no longer my soldiers. Death alone remains for me!'

The soldiers were confused. They rallied round their favourite commander, crossed St. Gothard, and entered Switzerland. After scattering a French force on the way, Soovorov advanced by narrow paths scarcely known to the bravest hunters. He crossed the famous so-called Devil's Bridge, and descended to the Muttathal, or valley. But there he learned that Korsakov, prematurely left by the Archduke Charles, had been defeated at Zurich by the French general Masséna, and had retreated towards the north. Masséna, with sixty thousand soldiers, endeavoured to shut up Soovorov in the Muttathal, and Soovorov had only twenty thousand. In so desperate a condition he summoned a council of war. It decided to turn towards Glaris, and to force a way through the French army. In vain did Masséna try to block up the passage. He was completely defeated. After surmounting extraordinary obstacles, the Russians at length issued from the mountains and breathed freely. (Ilovaiski, eighth edition, p. 366.)

During this never-to-be-forgotten campaign, the Russian troops, under command of their favourite field-marshal, performed prodigies of valour, and overcame the very obstacles of nature itself. Although brought up in a cold or temperate climate, the soldiers unweariedly fought under the burning Italian sun, in the valleys of the Po. These patient warriors were accustomed only to the level plains of their own country, but, notwithstanding, although hungry, ragged, and nearly with bare feet, in damp weather, ascended the snow-covered, cloud-capped summits of the Alps, and, aided by bayonets, cleared a way of escape from the French.

The Grand Duke Constantine Pavlovitch was in Soovorov's army, and took an active part in this campaign.

Ilovaiski (thirteenth edition, p. 328)—quoting from Milivotine's *History of the War between Russia and France in 1799*—narrates that when at last the worn-out Russian troops reached the summit of Mount St. Gothard, Soovorov went to the so-called hospice or house of entertainment for travellers there. The Capuchin friars came out to meet him. The prior, a venerable man of seventy,



with hair white as snow, invited the field-marshal to enter the refectory, where a simple repast had been prepared. 'No, holy father,' exclaimed Soovorov, 'however hungry we are, it is our first duty to pray to God. Offer up a thanksgiving, and then let us go to table.'

At this epoch an expedition composed of united Anglo-Russian troops in Holland terminated unsuccessfully. Whereupon Paul, displeased with his allies, recalled the Russian armies to their own country. Not only so: he even began to hold intercourse with Bonaparte, first consul of the French Republic, and finally resolved to declare war on England. The emperor, however, died suddenly (March 11, 1801), during preparations for the war.

Paul perished, assassinated. His naturally over-sensitive, exceedingly kind disposition had been soured by a bad education and by unfavourable surroundings, so that latterly he became a monomaniac. His fixed idea was that those near him were making attempts on his life. His suspicion, accordingly, became intolerable, both to himself and to others. He used to change his bedroom every night, in order that none might know where he slept. Even his own family was not exempt from distrust. He entertained the ideas of arresting and imprisoning his consort and sons. The most despotic, unreasonable, extraordinary commands were constantly given by him. As for the people, they were ignorant of the recent losses of the army, which had much irritated Paul, and accordingly thought him insane. Favours and disgrace quickly and unexpectedly followed each other. Numbers of individuals disappeared in a mysterious manner. Chopin, in his *Histoire de Russie*, makes the following remarks:—

'In order to escape from the glance of the autoerat, vast numbers of inhabitants quitted St. Petersburg. Those obliged to remain there, either by their occupation or from other causes, only in trembling and with uncovered head passed the palace of St. Michael, where, like a second Louis XI., the gloomy Paul, surrounded by informers, made a list of persons condemned.

'Accordingly, his death was decreed. It is said that when he consented to form alliance with the first consul, and along with him to dictate laws to all Europe, he (Paul) ordered a map to be brought. Then, drawing a line from the source of the Oder to its mouth, he exclaimed, "Let all the people of the west be under French influence, and let those of the east remain under the influence of Russia!"'

Andréev (p. 289) mentions one unreasonable command of Paul. We mean, that all who rode in a carriage, on seeing the sovereign, should descend and bow down before him. Ladies were permitted to do so while standing on the carriage-step.



‘Whether on horseback or in a conveyance, the emperor daily took out-of-door exercise. In bad weather, or when the streets of St. Petersburg were dirty, very amusing scenes sometimes took place, when elegantly dressed noblemen were obliged to descend from their carriage, in order to bow to the emperor as he passed. On one occasion, a similar incident had even a tragic conclusion. A certain teacher of music, Mr. Daloko, well known in his time, on meeting his majesty at a spot where the road was exceedingly muddy, regretted to spoil a pair of silk stockings, and stood on the carriage-step, like a lady, to bow to Paul, who approached. It was thought that Daloko, as a foreigner, had perhaps done so on purpose. Thus, to punish him, he was ordered to walk three times round the Red Gate. Poor Daloko on reaching home, either from fright or from cold, fell ill of fever and died.’

Yet Paul was naturally generous, and gave with perfect grace, especially when there was question of atoning for any injustice. We can only regret that he was soured by a bad education, and that, latterly, unfortunate circumstances obscured his reason.

## CHAPTER XLIV

### A CHAPTER DEDICATED TO LOVERS OF THE MARVELLOUS

NARRATION of the Grand Duke Pavel Petrovitch concerning his vision of Peter the Great, quoted from Andréev’s work (pp. 411-417):—

‘The psychologist or the physiologist would with difficulty find another nature more worthy of attentive study than that of the Emperor Paul. His imagination was often so lively, that what he only supposed, seemed to him really to exist. Even when a boy of ten years old, that peculiarity was remarked by his tutor Poroshine. And so the prince continued to the end of his life. He believed in dreams and in prognostics. We may mention his dream during the night before he ascended the throne. The dream is reported to us in Rastopchine’s *Notes*. It seemed to Paul that three times he was raised aloft by an invisible power. Armfeldt also reports Paul’s words concerning a dream he had on the night before his death. He thought that a very tight brocade jacket was forced so violently on his back, that he felt ready to scream from pain.

‘The erection of the Michael Engineer Corps, in which Paul spent the last months of his life, and where he died, is also directly connected with his belief in visions and prognostics. Otherwise, the soldier who affirmed that he had seen St. Michael at the spot on which the Engineer Corps now stands, would never have been believed.

‘In the present day, medical science has proved that an over-excited imagination frequently proceeds from indigestion; and certainly, from Poroshine’s *Notes*, this theory is confirmed. At the age of ten years, Paul’s vivid imagination astonished his teachers; and at that very time he constantly suffered from indigestion. Vomiting and violent headache were likewise frequent symptoms of his complaint. Poroshine, not knowing how otherwise to explain these ailments, used to maintain that they probably were occasioned by Paul’s habit of swallowing large pieces of food imperfectly masticated, because he disliked to sit long at table.

‘The narration we are about to quote concerning the grand duke’s vision of Peter I., combined with other circumstances of the same kind, more fully discloses to us the psychological peculiarities of that most remarkable man.

‘In 1782 Pavel Petrovitch, along with his young consort Maria Feodorovna, went to travel abroad. Not a few details of that journey are to be found in the *Notes* of the Baroness Oberkirch.

‘Baroness Oberkirch was from childhood the friend of Princess Dorothea of Würtemberg, subsequently the Empress Maria Feodorovna, and, along with her and her consort, travelled in France, Belgium, and Germany. Pavel Petrovitch much esteemed the baroness. The empress, too, continued to retain her early, girlish attachment to her friend. On one occasion, when the grand duke made the baroness a present of fruit, Maria Feodorovna is said even to have felt a slight shade of jealousy, as she also did when Paul expressed his great admiration of the French queen, Marie Antoinette, when he saw her in Paris.

‘On July 10, 1782, in Brussels, Pavel Petrovitch was travelling under the name of the Comte du Nord, and was supping in company. The grand duchess was not at table, as she was fatigued by the journey, and by the theatre, which the travellers had visited immediately after reaching Brussels. The supper, perhaps, or the warm summer evening, gave a peculiar tone to the conversation. It soon turned to the marvellous, and to stories concerning visions, etc. Each narrated something wonderful from his own experience. The grand duke alone remained silent.

‘Here,’ continues Andréev, ‘we quote literally from the *Notes* of the Baroness Oberkirch (ii. pp. 94-100). And the *Notes* of the baroness are worthy of credence. Everything interesting which she heard she immediately committed to paper. For example, not long previously she had written down a narrative of the Prince de Ligne, after hearing it from him. The Grand Duchess Maria Feodorovna did the same also; although, after all, the prince’s narrative of how he had been present, dressed as a nun, when a young person took the veil, does not much interest us, even if it produced a deep impression on his hearers.

"But what does your imperial highness say?" exclaimed the Prince de Ligne, turning to Paul. "Have you nothing to relate? Is it possible that the marvellous does not exist in Russia? Or have evil spirits and sorcerers not succeeded in bewitching you with their enchantment?"

The grand duke raised his head. "Koorakine knows," said he, "that, like others, I have also something to narrate. But there are recollections which I strive to banish from my memory: I already have suffered not a little from them."

Silence reigned in the apartment. The grand duke looked at Koorakine, and his glance expressed a sad, oppressive feeling.

"Is it not true that something very strange once happened to me?" said Paul, addressing Prince Koorakine.

"So strange, your imperial highness, that in spite of all my confidence in you, I can only attribute it to a transport of imagination," replied Koorakine.

"No!" said Paul, "it was true, literally true; and if Madame Oberkirch gives her word of honour not to tell my wife, I shall narrate to you what took place. But allow me, gentlemen, to beg that you will keep my story secret," added the grand duke, laughing, "for certainly it would be very unpleasant if in all Europe a story were repeated regarding a vision in which I take part."

"We all promised; and, at least, as far as I am concerned," says the Baroness Oberkirch, "I have kept my word. For, should these notes ever see the light, not only the former, but even the present generation will have passed from the scene; and none among the living will remain who will be interested in this narrative! So I shall repeat it, word for word, as I heard it from the grand duke.")

"One evening, or rather night," said his imperial highness, "I was walking in the streets of St. Petersburg, accompanied by Koorakine and two servants. Koorakine and I had passed the evening together in my palace, while conversing and smoking. So we thought to refresh ourselves by taking a moonlight walk. The weather was not cold. It was a moonlight night of our spring, but certainly not the spring of southern countries. Our conversation was neither concerning religion nor any other serious subject, but, on the contrary, was cheerful; and Koorakine made jests regarding the persons we met. One servant walked somewhat in advance of me, and another followed Koorakine, while he himself followed at some steps behind me. The moonlight was so bright, that in it one could easily have read a letter, consequently shadows were exceedingly dark. On turning the corner of one street, in the deep entrance of a gateway I suddenly remarked a tall, thin figure, wrapped in a Spanish mantle, and with a military hat drawn down over the eyes. He seemed to be waiting for some one. No sooner



had I passed him, than he advanced and came towards my left side, without saying a word. I could not see a single feature of his face. It appeared to me that, while walking along the pavement, his feet made a strange noise, as if one stone were striking another. I was amazed; and the feeling which took possession of me was still stronger, when I felt a lead-like chill in all my left side, which was near the unknown. I shivered, and turning towards Koorakine, said—

“‘Fate has sent us a strange companion!’ ‘What companion?’ replied Koorakine. ‘The man walking at my side, who, it seems to me, may easily be remarked by the noise he is making.’

“‘Koorakine opened his eyes in amazement, and observed that no one was walking at my left side.

“‘How so? Dost thou not see the man between myself and the wall of the house?’

“‘Please your imperial highness, you yourself are walking so near the wall of the house, that it is physically impossible for any one to be between it and you.’

“‘I stretched out my hand, and, sure enough, I touched stone. But still the unknown was there, and followed me step by step, while the noise of his feet was like a hammer striking against the pavement. I looked at him more attentively than before, and beneath his hat shone eyes so bright that I have seen none like them either before or since. He stared directly at me, and produced on me a kind of fascination.

“‘Ah!’ exclaimed I, addressing Koorakine, ‘I cannot tell thee what I feel; but it is something extraordinary!’

“‘I trembled, neither from terror nor from cold. I felt a peculiar sensation in all my members; and it seemed to me as if the very blood froze in my veins. Suddenly, from under the mantle which covered the unknown resounded a deep, sad voice. It exclaimed, ‘Paul!’

“‘I was influenced by unseen power, and mechanically answered, ‘What do you want?’

“‘‘Paul!’ said the voice again, and this time it seemed more sympathetic, but still with a shade of sadness. I could not answer a word. The voice once more called me by my name, and the unknown at length halted. I felt an inward impulse to do the same.

“‘‘Paul! Poor Paul! Poor grand duke!’

“‘‘Dost thou hear?’ said I to Koorakine, who had also halted.

“‘‘Nothing,’ replied he—‘nothing at all!’

“‘But as far as I myself am concerned, that voice till now resounds in mine

ears! I made a desperate effort over myself, and asked the unknown who he was and what he wanted.

“‘Who am I, poor Paul? I am he who takes interest in thy fate, and who wishes that thou shouldst not become too much attached to this world, because thou shalt not inhabit it long. Live by the laws of justice, and thine end will be tranquil. Dread the reproaches of conscience. To a noble mind there is no punishment greater.’

“He again began to walk, while he looked at me with the same penetrating glance. I then stopped, and so did he, for I felt the necessity of advancing towards him. He did not speak, and I had no particular wish to address him. I walked behind him, for he was now walking before. Where he went I did not know. Koorakine wishes to believe nothing about it. Look, he is laughing. He thinks it was only like a dream.

“At length we reached a large open space, between a bridge across the Neva and the building of the senate-house. The unknown walked directly towards one particular part of the plain, which seemed already prepared for him. I, of course, followed him, and then halted. ‘Farewell, Paul!’ said the unknown. ‘Thou wilt see me again, here, and elsewhere.’

“At the same time, his hat seemed raised as by itself; and mine eyes met the eagle glance, the dark brow, and the stern features of my great-grandfather, Peter I. When I recovered from my amazement and terror, he was no longer beside me.

“On that very spot, the Empress Catherine is about to erect a monument, which will soon occasion the surprise of all Europe. I allude to an equestrian statue on granite, and representing Peter. The statue is placed on a rock. I did not advise my mother to select that spot, chosen, or rather divined, by the vision. I cannot describe my feelings when I first saw that statue. I dread the thought.

“I dread the feeling of the fear I felt. And, in spite of all that Prince Koorakine says, that it was only a dream while walking in the streets, the minutest details of that vision are still in my memory. I maintain, as before, that it was a vision: and all connected with it is still as distinctly before me as if it had happened yesterday.

“On returning home, I found that my left side was literally petrified by cold, and I only felt a certain degree of warmth a few hours afterwards, when I lay down in a warm bed and covered myself up as much as possible.

“I hope my story pleases you; and if I have made you wait, at least it has been for something.”

“Please your imperial highness, do you know what all that signifies?” inquired Prince de Ligne.

“It signifies that I shall die young!”

“Pardon me if I differ from your opinion. I presume that it directly proves two things. In the first place, it is better not to walk at night, when one is sleepy, and especially, it is better not to walk too near a frozen stone wall in a climate like yours. I cannot deduce other conclusions from it. The shade of your illustrious ancestor existed only in your own imagination, and I doubt not that on your overcoat there remained dust from the wall of the house.”

“That story,” continues the Baroness Oberkirch, “as you may imagine, produced a deep impression on us all. Few heard it; for the grand duke never wished to make it known. Till this day (1782) the grand duchess never heard it. It would have terrified her.

“On returning to my own room, I immediately committed what I had heard to writing, as I indeed always did concerning what was most important, limiting myself merely to remarks which might aid my memory regarding subjects of minor interest.”

On further reading the remarks of the baroness, we see that Paul seemed to regret having confided his secret to his wife’s friend. He even endeavoured to persuade her that the narration was composed on purpose to tell a terrible adventure in turn. But the baroness was an acute observer; thus it was not easy first to persuade her, and then to shake her belief.

On August 17 (29th N.S.) of the same year (1782), Pavel Petrovitch and his consort were at Montbeliar, on a visit to Maria Feodorovna’s parents, when a letter was there received from St. Petersburg, announcing that on the 18th of that month the statue of Peter the Great had been solemnly unveiled in presence of the Empress Catherine. When the letter was read, Paul put his finger on his lips and made a sign to the baroness. The baroness attentively observed him, and remarked that he tried to smile, but that a deadly paleness overspread his countenance.

That clearly proved to her whether he had merely jested or spoken truly during the memorable night at Brussels.

*N.B.*—The *Mémoires* of the Baroness Oberkirch terminate in 1789.

## CHAPTER XLV

### FAMILY OF THE EMPEROR PAUL

FIRST CONSORT—Augusta Wilhelmina of Hesse-Darmstadt (Natalia Alexéevna).

Second consort—Sophia Dorothea of Würtemberg (Maria Feodorovna).

#### SONS

1. Eldest son and successor—Alexander I.

2. Constantine, married Julia of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha (Anna Feodorovna).



Constantine's second consort was a Polish lady, Countess Grudzinska, who subsequently received the title of Princess Lowicz.

3. The Emperor Nicholas I.

4. Michael, married Frederika Charlotte Mary, princess of Würtemberg—(Helena Pavlovna). They had five daughters—

1. Elizabeth, married the duke of Nassau, and died soon afterwards.

2. Catherine, married George, duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz.

3, 4, and 5. Mary, Alexandra, and Anna, died in infancy.

#### DAUGHTERS OF THE EMPEROR PAUL

1. Alexandra, married Joseph, prince palatine of Hungary, and died soon afterwards.

2. Helena, married the duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin.

3. Mary, duchess of Saxe-Weimar.

4. Olga, died in infancy.

5. Catherine, first married a duke of Holstein Oldenburg, and then William I., king of Würtemberg.

6. Anna, married William II., king of the Netherlands.

## CHAPTER XLVI

REIGN OF ALEXANDER I. (PAVLOVITCH), 12TH MARCH 1801—  
19TH NOVEMBER 1825

ALEXANDER PAVLOVITCH was born December 12, 1777. He was the favourite grandson of Catherine II., and, under her special care, he received a very good education.

During the reign of Alexander I., Russia again extended its boundaries, acquired remarkable influence on the political events of Europe, and finally obtained a high degree of outward splendour.

Nearly the whole of the first half of this reign was a continuation of uninterrupted war.

In 1808 hostilities began with Sweden, because the latter country refused to join the alliance of northern states against England. The theatre of the war was Finland. Russian armies, commanded by Count Buxhaven, expelled weak Swedish forces from these regions, and obliged the impregnable fort of Sweaborg to surrender.

During the following winter, also, Russians, under command of Barclay de 1809. Tolly, crossed the Gulf of Bothnia on ice (near the Strait of Kvarken) and attacked Sweden itself. Then Gustavus IV., king of Sweden, was obliged by circumstances to abdicate. His uncle and successor, Charles XIII., concluded peace at Fridrichsham, by which Russia obtained Finland, to the river Tornea, along with the islands of Aland in the Baltic Sea. In a diet assembled at Borgo (March 1809) Alexander I. confirmed the ancient organisation of Finland, and granted it its own government, with the title of 'grand principality,' to which was added the province or government of Viborg, *i.e.* the part of Finland conquered by Peter I. and Elizaveta Petrovna, which had already become half-Russianised.

Meanwhile, in the south, war broke out with Turkey; for the Porte, excited by 1806-1812. Napoleon I., violated some clauses of the convention of peace.

This war continued, with variable success, till the command of the Russian army was given to Count Kamenski. He forced the Turks backwards to the very Balkan mountains; but death terminated his exploits. Kamenski's successor, Kootoozov, allured the grand vizier to the left bank of the Danube, and then completely defeated him. At length the sultan consented to make peace, which was concluded at Bucharest. Turkey ceded the region of Bessarabia to Russia, and the river Pruth became the boundary. At the same time, Russia carried on a successful war with Persia, in the country beyond the Caucasus, for the possession of Georgia. During this war, the Russian generals Tsitzianov, Goodovitch, and Kottiarevski especially distinguished themselves.

But all these combats were insignificant compared with the great struggle which Russia was destined to carry on with the first conqueror of the age, Napoleon Bonaparte. The most powerful states hastened to form a coalition, in order, by their united strength, to arrest the rapid extent of French dominion in Europe. At first, Russia acted against Napoleon, and in alliance with the Austrians, to whose aid Alexander sent armies commanded by Kootoozov. The campaign, however, terminated by the defeat of the Russo-Austrian forces at Austerlitz, in Moravia (1805). Austria concluded peace, and Russia continued war during the following year, but in alliance with Prussia. Austerlitz, 1805.

The second war was as unsuccessful as the first. Napoleon scattered the Prussian forces before Jena, attacked the Russian army, then commanded by General Benningsen, and, after some indecisive actions, dealt it a crushing defeat at Friedland. Finally, the Emperor Alexander concluded peace with Napoleon at Tilsit, in 1807. Battle at Jena, 1806.  
Peace of Tilsit, 1807.

The province of Bielostok, belonging to Prussia, was ceded to Russia, and both emperors promised each other mutual aid in future war.

Russia, moreover, agreed to close its ports to English vessels, or, in other words, to take part in the so-called 'continental system,' by which Napoleon endeavoured to ruin English trade. During the ensuing war between Napoleon and Austria (1809), Russia, according to conditions of the peace of Tilsit, sent an auxiliary force to the boundaries of Galicia; but eventually, Russia declined decided action against Austria. At the termination of the war, Russia obtained part of eastern Galicia. (Ilovaiski, p. 331.)

## CHAPTER XLVII

### NAPOLÉON INVADES RUSSIA

1809-1812.

BUT the alliance between the French emperor and Russia could not be durable. The absolute laws which Napoleon dictated to all Europe soon became insupportable. The causes of rupture were the following circumstances:—In the first place, Napoleon evidently aimed at reinstating the kingdom of Poland. Then he seized the possessions of the duke of Oldenburg, a relative of the Emperor Alexander, and paid no attention to protests of the Russian court. Besides, Russia was much embarrassed by the 'continental system,' because the export of its raw material had greatly decreased. The so-called 'assignation bank-notes' had much fallen in value, and the price of goods had increased. Accordingly, dreading the total derangement of finances, the Russian government did not strictly observe the 'continental system,' and, in order to lessen the export of silver money, put a very high duty on some objects of luxury obtained from France. Napoleon thereupon assembled immense armies to make war on Russia. Besides French troops, there were auxiliary regiments from Lombardy, Illyria, Tuscany, Naples, Holland, Austria, Hesse-Darmstadt, Bavaria, Würtemberg, Westphalia, Baden, Mecklenburg, Spain, Portugal, and Poland. The French forces amounted to six hundred thousand men. (Soloviev, p. 373.)

On June 10, 1812, Napoleon thus addressed his armies:—'Soldiers,—A second Polish war has begun! The first terminated before Friedland and at Tilsit. Russia is allured by fate! It will not avert its doom. Is it possible it thinks we have changed? Are we not the warriors of Austerlitz? The second Polish war will be as glorious for France as was the first; but the peace that we conclude will be durable, and will terminate the fifty years' haughty influence of Russia on the affairs of Europe. Onward! Let us cross the Niemen, and carry our arms towards the boundaries of Russia!' (Ilovaiski, p. 331.)

Accordingly, on June 11, 1812, the French crossed the Niemen, between Kovno and Grodno.



The Emperor Alexander was at Vilna when he heard of the enemy's 1812. invasion. He at once gave orders to his army, and concluded with the following words :—

‘I need not remind commanders and our soldiers of their duty and bravery ! In them, from ancient times, flow the mighty conquests of Slavonian blood ! Warriors ! you defend your religion—your native country—your freedom ! I am with you ! The commencement is from God !’

The mandate—given in the name of Count Saltikov, president of the state council—terminated thus :—

‘I shall not lay down arms till not a single enemy remains in my empire.’

#### BARCLAY DE TOLLY—BAGRATION—KOOTOOZOV

The forces of the Russians amounted to 250,000 men (Ilovaiski, p. 331). They were divided into two armies, one of which was placed in the government of Vilna, and the other in that of Grodno. The commander-in-chief of the first army was the minister of war, Barclay de Tolly (of a Livonian family), an experienced general, well versed in his occupation. His desire to correct deficiencies and to eradicate abuses in the army urged him to effect its reorganisation, which doubtless was most beneficial, but which occasioned the discontent and ill-will of his powerful predecessor, Count Araktscheev, who endeavoured to injure him in every possible way. As for Barclay, his chief characteristic was distrust. Thus he himself used to do what he might have confided to subordinates, and thereby embarrassed the administration of the armies. Not only so : Barclay's manners were dry ; he wanted the art of being able to address Russian soldiers. Accordingly, the troops and the people considered him as a foreigner, which, during a popular war, was a misfortune. The commander-in-chief was persuaded that it was better to avoid a decisive battle with the greatest general of the age, and that it was safer to retreat to the interior of the country before the enemy's superior force. But these measures were opposed by the popular feelings, and besides, they discouraged the troops. Barclay was, moreover, obliged to conceal his intentions, and sometimes in his orders he did not intimate what circumstances and necessity demanded. So the armies murmured at the extreme caution of their chief, and showed distrust in him as a German.

The commander of the second army was Prince Bagration, a brave general, of Georgian origin. Bagration was a favourite of Soovorov and the delight of the army. His energy was unwearied ; he was the first to appear in battle, and the

last to retreat. Less cultivated and capable of administration than Barclay, Bagration, however, surpassed him in the art of inspiring the troops with courage, and of addressing Russian soldiers. Both armies had met at Smolensk, but their action on the same scene was inconvenient. Each commander only paid attention to the obstacles he encountered, and did not consider the position of the other.

In a manifesto issued by the Emperor Alexander on July 11, he thus addressed the people:—

‘May the enemy meet with a Pojarski in each nobleman, a Palitzine in each of the clergy, a Miniore in each citizen. Let us all unite! With the cross in our hearts, and arms in our hands, no human power can subdue us!’

In Smolensk, the nobility intimated willingness to furnish twenty thousand warriors for the general armament. On July 11, Alexander arrived in Moscow, and was there received with universal joy. The Moscovite nobles offered to furnish eighty thousand warriors, and to contribute three millions of roubles. The merchants promised ten millions. The general number of volunteers in Russia amounted to 320,000 men, and contributions were not less than a hundred millions of roubles. But even then, freely-made sacrifices did not terminate. ‘Please tell us when it is time to burn our houses,’ said peasants to the soldiers, while preparations were immediately made to destroy all on the enemy’s approach. (Soloviev, p. 374.)

The Emperor Alexander, on hearing the popular opinion concerning the action of the great army, gave the decision of so important an affair to a special committee. It decreed that it was necessary to nominate one commander over both armies. The choice fell on the venerable Prince Michael Ilarionovitch Kootoozov, then aged sixty-seven years. Kootoozov had become known during the reign of Catherine II. He was promoted by Roomiantzov, and was a favourite of Soovorov. Kootoozov had, moreover, distinguished himself as a diplomatist while ambassador at Constantinople. He was also famous by the recent brilliant termination of the Turkish war, and finally was appointed general of the St. Petersburg armies. Caution, reserve, even cunning, were the chief characteristics of Kootoozov. Soovorov used to say: ‘Kootoozov is wise, very wise! Reebas himself will not deceive him!’

Reebas was an admiral, well known for his artful disposition, and fertile in resources.

The appointment of Kootoozov to command both armies was hailed with joy by the troops and the people. On August 17, he arrived at the headquarters of the general force.

'How indeed could one retreat with such fine fellows!' exclaimed Kootoozov, on saluting the honorary sentinel.

'Kootoozov has come to beat the French,' said the soldiers. The report was then brought that a large eagle had soared aloft and hovered over the commander's head when he went round the camp. All awaited a battle; the enemy was not far distant. On the following day, however, orders were given to retreat. (Soloviev, p. 376.)

#### BORODINO

But the retreat was not of great length. The armies halted at Borodino, in the district of Mojaisk, and at a hundred and eight versts from Moscow. On August 26, a general engagement took place. With not more than a hundred thousand, the Russians met a force of a hundred and thirty thousand French. The action began at dawn, and only terminated in the evening. On both sides the loss was immense.

The centre and right wing of the Russian army were commanded by Barclay de Tolly, and the left wing by Bagration. Napoleon, as usual, strove to break into the centre, and to scatter the left wing. The best French marshals were Ney, Davy, and Murat. They, with a mass of infantry and cavalry, bore down upon the force of Bagration. The latter long and bravely supported the attack of the enemy; but at length a fatal wound forced him to quit the battlefield. His army got into disorder, and moved backwards. Then Napoleon, unsupported by his marshals, missed a favourable moment. In Bagration's place Kootoozov sent General Dochtorov. The Russians regained their position, and repulsed further attacks. Meanwhile, in the Russian centre, the French were heroically repulsed. They were commanded by Eugène de Beauharnais, Napoleon's stepson. After a battle of ten hours, the enemy's attack terminated, and the remainder of the day was spent in incessant, cruel cannonade.

#### MOSCOW ABANDONED BY THE RUSSIANS AND OCCUPIED BY THE FRENCH

After losing many generals (among whom were Bagration and the brave Count Kootaisov) and nearly the half of his army, Kootoozov did not decide on renewing the battle on the following day. He accordingly retreated beyond Mojaisk.

Napoleon proclaimed a victory. The Russians prepared for a battle before Moscow; and the populace there became excited, because inspired by patriotic appeal from the governor-general, Count Rastopchine. But the commander-in-chief decided to sacrifice the ancient capital, in order to save the army.



When the Russian forces were drawn out towards the south-western side of the town and prepared for battle, Barclay de Tolly first remarked to the commander-in-chief the unfavourable position, traversed by ravines, and having the river Moskva behind. In case of a defeat, the army might easily be destroyed by the enemy's superior numbers. Kootoozov accordingly summoned a council of war. In a small village named Feolee, near Moscow, in a peasant's hut, the generals assembled. They were Barclay, Benningsen, Dochterov, Konovnitzine, Raevski, Ermolov, etc. The commander-in-chief proposed two questions: Should a general engagement take place? or should Moscow be ceded without a battle? Opinions differed. Benningsen, who had lost the battle at Friedland, warmly opposed Barclay, who urged a retreat, because, if the army were destroyed, not only Moscow, but all Russia would be in the enemy's power. After listening to arguments on both sides, the commander-in-chief gave orders to retreat. Accordingly, the troops passed through Moscow and took the road to Riazan (2nd September). The brave General Miloradovitch commanded the rear-guard and protected the retreat of the army. But it was necessary to give it time to quit the city, which was in a condition of terrible alarm, and was actually blocked up by carts, laden with the goods of those who were also going away. Miloradovitch proposed to the celebrated Murat—commander of the French vanguard—to conclude a truce of a few hours, in order to clear Moscow for the French. In case of the proposal being refused, Miloradovitch promised to fight till the last man fell, and to leave only ruins behind. Murat accepted the proposal.

Ilovaiski (p. 334) narrates the following curious incident:—

‘At the time when the Moscow garrison was evacuating the Kremlin and passing through the town, the band of the regiment was playing; this, in the existing sad circumstances, produced an unfavourable impression, and caused murmurs among the soldiers and the inhabitants. The hasty Miloradovitch reproached the general who commanded the garrison. “But if a garrison, at the surrender of a fort, receives permission to retire freely,” rejoined the simple-minded general, “the retreat is accompanied by music. At least, that is stated in the regulations of Peter the Great.” “Is there any question of the surrender of Moscow in the regulations of Peter the Great?” shouted the enraged Miloradovitch. “Order your music to cease!”’

Moscow was already abandoned by the greater part of its inhabitants. All valuable property of the crown and also archives were removed. The next care of Kootoozov was to transport the sick and wounded. Fire-engines were likewise taken away. Orders were given to break barrels of wine in wine merchants' courts.

All barges on the river Moskva, with private property or that of the crown, were burned. Stores of provisions were destroyed. A few police officials were left in the city, in order to set it on fire. On September 2, the Russian troops began to evacuate Moscow. They were immediately followed by the French. 'So here is the famous town at last!' exclaimed Napoleon, on viewing Moscow from the so-called 'Poklonnaia Gora,' or Hill of Salutation, where Russian peasants are accustomed to bow at the sight of Moscow, as a mother-city. At the Dorogomeelovski Bridge, Napoleon alighted from horseback, and awaited a deputation of the citizens. But he waited in vain. No one came. On hearing that Moscow was abandoned by its inhabitants, he did not wish to believe it, and demanded a deputation. However, only a few foreigners appeared. They confirmed the report that the citizens had gone away, with the exception of a small number of French and German traders. There still also remained some Russians of the lower ranks. After passing the night at the Dorogomeelovski village, on the following morning (September 3), at three o'clock, Napoleon removed to the Kremlin and took possession of the palace. But, the previous evening, fires broke out all around, and during the night, from the 3rd till the 4th of September, flames encompassed the greater part of the city. At noon on the 4th, fire also appeared in the Kremlin. Thus the conqueror, with great difficulty, made his way out of the burning town, and took up his quarters at the Petrovski palace, near Moscow.

It is said that Count Rastopchine had made all possible preparations for the fearful conflagration; and after a dinner given to invited guests, himself set fire to his beautiful country-house in the village of Voronov. (Andréev, p. 316.) Thus, instead of rich booty, abundant provisions, and especially comfortable winter quarters, on which the French had counted, they found only ruins and hunger. During the space of three days, three-fourths of Moscow had burned, while the greater part of the churches were devastated and plundered.

Nearly all the Russians who remained in Moscow were in rags, and without shoes. Many fed from roots in neighbouring kitchen-gardens, or ate wet corn, found in the remnants of barges at the river. The French also did not fare better. On fires, lighted with expensive furniture and pictures, torn books, or Russian images dragged from the corners of rooms, hung kettles, in which horse-flesh was cooked. On the streets, heads of sugar were seen tossing about, as well as bags of coffee and boxes of sweetmeats, but bread was scarcely to be found.

'The conflagration of Moscow took place without the emperor's knowledge. Indeed, despair seemed to seize all classes of Russian society,' says Andréev (p. 316).

Meanwhile, the heroic sacrifice made by the Russians in thus destroying their



ancient capital greatly embarrassed Napoleon. He felt himself in a new position, and was, as it were, put out of his way. In vain did he make proposals of peace to the Emperor Alexander. They remained unnoticed. In vain also were threats made to march against St. Petersburg. Threats were of no avail. When Kootoozov's messenger, Colonel Misho, brought the emperor news that Moscow had been sacrificed, he was deeply touched by the colonel's narratives of the suffering of the citizens and the army. 'Tell every one,' replied Alexander, 'that when I have but one soldier remaining, I shall summon my faithful nobles and good villagers, and lead them myself! When every source has been drained, I shall allow my beard to grow; and rather will I consent to rove about in the wastes of Siberia, than to sign conditions shameful to my native country and to my good subjects, whose sacrifices I know how to appreciate!' (Soloviev, p. 377.)

#### KOOTOOZOV AT TAROOTEENA—THE PARTISAN AND POPULAR WAR

But soon the scene was changed. The conflagration of Moscow was the last great sacrifice of the Russians. During five weeks which the French spent in Moscow, their terrible plunder completed the disorder and disorganisation which gradually appeared in Napoleon's army with its first step towards the boundaries of Russia. A few days after quitting Moscow, Kootoozov suddenly left the Riazane road. Thus he deceived the enemy pursuing him, and, by a skilful movement, went to the old Kalooga road. In this wise he protected Kalooga, with its large store of provisions, Toola, with its manufactories of arms, and communication with the southern fertile regions of the empire. On September 20, Kootoozov pitched his camp at Tarooteena on the river Naro. 'Ta routine a dérouté Napoléon!' said Kootoozov, who was a witty man, and liked to make puns. But Tarooteena enacted only a secondary part in the terrible tragedy. The partisan war began. Besides, cold and hunger overcame the French; so that it was only necessary to pursue them. By surrounding the French army with posts, the Russians prevented Napoleon's soldiers from obtaining provisions. In a word, the most fearful scenes were everywhere witnessed during this famous retreat. Sometimes prisoners were buried alive in the earth; or the French themselves, rendered inhuman by hunger, ate human flesh, and said that, although it was terrible to do so, it at least tasted better than that of horses. The falling of frozen bodies into ditches had a metallic sound. They were piled up one on another in masses; and on those heaps of corpses the light-minded French soldiers sat and played at cards! (Andréev, p. 316.)

In Moscow, the French had had neither bread nor meat; so they shot crows, ate cats, or the flesh of horses which had died. Thus illnesses of all sorts broke



out. To make matters still worse, there was no fuel for fire, so necessary during the damp, cold nights of a Russian autumn. This of course caused new illnesses. But, at the very same time, the Russian forces at Tarootena fared better. Carts with provisions reached them from all quarters, and in consequence of generous contributions sent by the inhabitants near Moscow, and from southern governments, the Russian soldiers had nearly each day portions of meat and wine. The Russian army, in fact, grew gradually stronger and stronger, while that of the French became weaker and weaker. 'Two hundred and sixty-six thousand bodies of the French were burned in the four governments of Moscow, Smolensk, Minsk, and Vilna' (Andréev, p. 317).

#### THE FRENCH EVACUATE MOSCOW

At length (October 6) the Russians acted on the offensive. Commanded by Benningsen, they attacked and defeated the French vanguard, led by Murat. The engagement took place at the river Tscher-nish-na, about ten versts from the Tarootena camp. Napoleon was reviewing his troops at the Kreml, when news of this defeat reached him. He immediately stopped the review, and gave orders to evacuate Moscow. He left the city to the command of Marshal Mortier, who had orders to blow up the Kreml, to raze its walls to the ground, and to destroy all public buildings, except the Foundling Institution. At midnight, on October 11, the arsenal at the Kreml took fire. The palaces there were devastated. The tower of John the Great was much injured. Only the cathedrals remained entire. On October 11, when the French evacuated Moscow, it was immediately occupied by General Ilovaiski and Cossacks. (Soloviev, p. 379.)

At this critical period, the Russian people were inspired by thoroughly patriotic feeling. They patiently supported all losses and sufferings. The nobles of different governments, at their own cost, armed three hundred thousand warriors. All ranks and conditions contributed a hundred millions of roubles for the expense of the war. It was indeed altogether popular. (Ilovaiski, p. 335.)

The Don Cossacks, at the summons of their ataman Platov, every one took up arms, constantly harassed the retreating French, and cut them off in vast numbers. Indeed, the 'Great Retreat' was accompanied by a whole series of battles. The French were finally obliged to return to the ruined road of Smolensk, where they perished in thousands from cold and hunger. The entire way was actually covered with their bodies.

On the banks of the Berezeena the Russian generals thought to surround Napoleon. His rear-guard was followed by Kootvovoz with his chief force. From the north came Vittenstein, who, till this period, had protected the way

to St. Petersburg. He defeated the French at Polotzk. From the south hastened the army of the Danube, after terminating the Turkish war. That army was commanded by Admiral Tschish-a-gov. Napoleon, however, succeeded in passing the river, but with terrible loss. This was effected by a mistake of Tschish-a-gov, whose duty it was to block up the way of the French, and to prevent them from crossing the Berezeena. Accordingly, only a miserable remnant of the once splendid French army reached the Russian frontier.

After passing the Berezeena, the frost amounted to 30°. [Napoleon himself left Russia in a simple peasant's sledge; and on reaching Warsaw exclaimed, with indifference, 'There is but a step from the sublime to the ridiculous.' (Kaeedanov, p. 437.)

But, even after the expulsion of the French from Russia, the war did not terminate; for the Emperor Alexander decided that the struggle should continue till the dominion of France in Europe was at an end. Prussia, first among the German states, abandoned alliance with Napoleon, and its armies joined those of Russia. But the power of the French emperor was only overthrown when Austria joined the alliance against him, and after he lost a battle, which lasted three days, at Leipsic. The allied armies entered France, deposed Napoleon, and reinstated the dynasty of Bourbon. Napoleon, for himself and his son, was obliged to renounce all claim to the throne, but retained the title of emperor, and received the administration of the island of Elba.

1813-1814.

20th October  
1814.

At the Congress of Vienna, where the Russian emperor occupied the primary position among European sovereigns, the chief decisions were: to alter the changes in Europe caused by the success of French arms; and, in many instances, to restore different countries to their previous condition. Russia, as a reward for aid against the French, received a large region of the duchy of Warsaw, which Napoleon had formed from land belonging to Prussia and Austria. Some regions were also returned to these states; and the remainder, under the name of the kingdom of Poland, was assigned to the special government of the Emperor Alexander (1815).

During the year 1814, the theatre of war was France. Napoleon was defeated at Brienne, but somewhat retrieved his fortune by overcoming Marshal Blücher.

But Napoleon was again defeated at Laon, and at Arsis-sur-Aube. The victory of the allies at Fère-Champenoise opened them the way to Paris, towards which they advanced (March 17). After a hot engagement on the 18th, from the heights of Belleville and Montmartre—chiefly carried on by the Russians—Paris surrendered. On March 19, the Emperor Alexander and the king of Prussia triumphantly entered the capital.



Early in 1815, on learning that great discontent existed in France against the new government, Napoleon secretly quitted the island of Elba and hastened to Paris, without meeting any opposition. Louis XVIII. was forced to flee from his capital to Belgium, and Napoleon was again proclaimed emperor. Hoping to strengthen his position, he intimated to the allied powers that he desired peace and was willing to fulfil all the conditions of the treaty of Paris. But the sovereigns of Europe declared him an enemy of public peace, and deprived him of the protection of law. In vain did he endeavour to withdraw Alexander of Russia from the alliance of European sovereigns, by communicating to him a secret convention, said to have been found among the documents of Louis XVIII., and formed by Austria, England, and France against Russia. Alexander remained true to the common cause of Europe. Three armies were immediately formed against France: one from southern Germany, under command of General Schwartzberg; the Prussians, with General Blücher, from the lower Rhine; and the English and Dutch, under Wellington, from Belgium. The Russian armies, then in Poland, were also to move to the banks of the Rhine. Napoleon appeared with his forces in Belgium, but lost a battle against Wellington at Waterloo, 18th June 1815; was forced a second time to renounce; and, by a decree of the allied sovereigns, was sent in exile to the island of St. Helena. Louis XVIII. then returned to Paris. The Hundred Days' reign of Napoleon cost France very dear. Besides the limitation of its frontiers, it was obliged to pay the heavy contribution of 800 millions, and for seven years to cede to the allies eighteen forts in north-eastern regions. However, by the solicitation of the Emperor Alexander, one million was deducted from the contribution, and the occupation of the forts was limited to two years. In 1818, at the Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, where the Emperor Alexander was present, along with the emperor of Austria and the king of Prussia, it was decided to withdraw the allied forces from France. (Soloviev, pp. 381-382.)

1815—Battle of Waterloo, 18th June.

Congress of Aix-la-Chapelle, 1818.

In 1815 (14th September) Alexander, the king of Prussia, and the emperor of Austria formed the so-called 'Sacred Alliance,' whose chief aims were to defend the Christian religion, to promote peace, to confirm the existing political condition of Europe.

Sacred Alliance, 14th September 1815.

#### CONGRESSES OF TROPPAU, NOVEMBER 1820—OF LAYBACH, JANUARY 1821— AND OF VERONA, OCTOBER 1822

In consequence of union among the most powerful states of Europe, revolutionary movements ceased in different directions. But in Spain the bad



government of Ferdinand VII. caused agitation among the troops, and discontent was also shared by the people, so that the king was forced to accept a limitation of his power. This also occurred in Naples. Portugal and northern Italy were likewise agitated. Consequently, in 1820, a congress took place at Troppau, formed by the plenipotentiary states, Russia, Austria, England, Prussia, and France, in presence of the Russian and Austrian emperors. A second congress was formed at Laybach (January 1821), to which the king of Naples was also invited. It was decided to restore order by force of the allied armies. Thus, Naples and Piëdmont were rendered tranquil. To decide the affairs of Spain, a congress met at Verona, October 1822, where, with the consent of the five powers, it was decreed that the French king, Louis XVIII., should send his armies beyond the Pyrenees. The French took possession of Madrid, and confirmed royal power.

#### THE GREEK QUESTION

During the latter days of Alexander I., he was much occupied by the Greek question. At the epoch when the people of Europe triumphed over Napoleon and overthrew the commencement of universal dominion, not tolerated by modern Christian history, the Greeks, oppressed by Turkey, also strove to revive. In 1814, there was formed a society called Heteria, whose aim was to enable Greeks to promote a general revival by means of education. As the society possessed considerable means, it educated young Greeks at European universities, and founded popular schools in Greece. One active member of the society was Count Capodistaria, a Greek in the island of Corfu, state secretary of the Emperor Alexander, and a famous diplomatist of the time. Another zealous member of the Heteria was a general in the Russian service, Prince Alexander Ipsilanti, son of the hospodar of Moldavia. Ipsilanti was among the number of those who cannot wait long ere putting an idea into execution. In 1821 he appeared in Moldavia, and summoned the Greeks to a general rising in favour of their religion and freedom. Consequently, there was a movement in the Morea and in the islands of the Archipelago. The Emperor Alexander, occupied with affairs in the west, showed displeasure at Ipsilanti's proceedings. But the sultan did not wish to believe the sincerity of that displeasure, and became inimical towards Russia. The Turks in Constantinople mercilessly massacred the defenceless Greeks. The patriarch Gregory and two bishops were crucified in church on Easter Sunday. The Russian ambassador left Constantinople, and Russian forces began to assemble at southern frontiers. European states, however, feared that Russia would become too powerful on the ruins of Turkey,

and, by moderation, succeeded in postponing war for four years, but did not succeed in preventing Turks from putting Christians to death. War thus became inevitable. But, on November 19, 1825, the Emperor Alexander, after a short illness, died of fever at Taganrog.

1824-1825.  
1825—Death  
of the  
Emperor  
Alexander I.,  
19th No-  
vember.

In 1824 a terrible inundation of the Neva, in St. Petersburg, was among the last events of Alexander's reign.

The Emperor Alexander's consort was Louisa Mary Augusta, princess of Baden (Elisaveta Alexéevna). They had two daughters, Mary and Elizabeth, who both died in infancy.

## CHAPTER XLVIII

### INTERIOR GOVERNMENT DURING THE REIGN OF ALEXANDER I.

IN a manifesto issued by Alexander I. when he ascended the throne, he intimated his intention 'to administer the state according to the law and the heart of Catherine II., and to continue her exceedingly wise decrees.' A ukaze was immediately published to permit the free passage of Russians and foreigners abroad, as was the case in 1796. Nobles and citizens belonging to guilds were exempt from corporal punishment, as were also priests and diakons (priests' assistants). Rural parishioners were also freed from the necessity of labouring church lands. The severe laws concerning censorship, which had existed during the previous reign, were mitigated. Each was permitted to have a private printing-press, as was the case while Catherine occupied the throne. The inspection of books was confided to civil governors, who employed the directors of public schools for that purpose. By a ukaze of April 2, 1801, the so-called 'secret expedition' was abolished, and, in order to investigate public offences, or affairs of that sort, it was decreed that they should be submitted to the ordinary course of justice.

In general, during the reign of Alexander Pavlovitch, some remarkable efforts were made to restrict the power of those who possessed serfs. For example, proprietors convicted of treating their serfs cruelly were deprived of them, and they were placed under guardianship. The custom of giving land with peasants, to reward private individuals for service, was discontinued. The peasants of the Baltic provinces received personal freedom without being provided with land.

As regards the administration of justice, very important changes were made;



or, in other words, the decided prohibition of torture and of all prejudiced interrogation. Milder measures were likewise employed towards the schismatics or Raskolniks. On February 20, 1803, there appeared a ukaze concerning the enfranchisement of proprietors' peasants, after concluding certain conditions.

Peasants and villages thus enfranchised by proprietors, along with land, were to form a separate class, called 'free agriculturers.' The first who expressed a wish to enfranchise peasants was Count Sergius Roomiantzev. Indeed, the favourite idea of Alexander I. was the total abolition of serfdom. But the greater number of the dignitaries argued that the peasants were as yet insufficiently prepared for entire freedom, and that so sudden a change endangered the tranquillity and integrity of the empire.

Alexander Pavlovitch, at the commencement of his reign, was, like Catherine, obliged in one ukaze to express himself thus: 'With heartfelt regret we remark that the pernicious habit of taking bribes not only exists, but is diffused even among those who should abhor a proceeding so hateful, and should use every effort to make it cease.'

In order to afford the clergy more means to act on the public mind by exhortation, care was taken to organise clerical institutions. Their maintenance was increased by a grant given to the church of an exclusive right to sell wax-candles in the institutions. A committee was then formed for clerical schools. In 1814, regulations were published for the academy, the seminary, and clerical institutions.

As far as secular education was concerned, we remark that, as during the reign of Catherine II., large and small popular schools began to be organised. For the greater part they, however, existed only in name. While Alexander occupied the throne, means for actual existence were granted to these institutions. Large popular schools were called gymnasiums, and the smaller were denominated district institutions. Besides, for elementary instruction, parish schools were formed. Institutions for teachers were founded in Moscow and in St. Petersburg. Professors from abroad were also engaged. The universities of Moscow, Vilna, and Dorpat (now called Youriev), which had previously existed, were re-organised, while new universities were founded in Kazane, Harkov, and finally in St. Petersburg.

During the first period of Alexander's reign, the individuals nearest his person were Novosiltzev, Tschartorejski, Strogonov, and Kotchoobei. Prince Adam Tschartorejski, as a Pole, and having constantly the idea of Poland's restoration, was particularly dangerous to Russia. He was administrator of public institutions in Vilna, where the young generation was brought up in a Polish spirit. Instead



of the previous council, summoned on important occasions, and formed of individuals appointed by the sovereign in 1801, a permanent state council was formed. In 1802 the ministry was organised.

From the year 1806, Count Speranski obtained great influence in the affairs of state. Speranski was son of a village priest in the government of Vladimir. The former first learned at the local seminary, but gradually advanced on account of his uncommon talents. He was chiefly promoted by Kotchoobei. Speranski bore the appellation of state secretary; but he was in reality considered as prime minister. His chief activity was observable in the reorganisation of the state council and the ministry, as well as his measures for correcting the finances. But Speranski had many enemies. Courtiers envied his elevation and influence. Officials were angry because he forced them to pass a new examination before receiving promotion. Finally, the people grumbled; for Speranski had augmented taxes. In March 1812, at the prospect of war with Napoleon, Speranski for some unknown reason fell into disgrace. First, he was exiled to Nijni-Novgorod, and then to Perm. In 1814 he was permitted to live at his own estate in Novgorod. Then he was governor of Penza, and afterwards general governor of Siberia. At a later period, Speranski returned to St. Petersburg, and occupied a place in the state council; but he no longer possessed his former influence. Siberia was then divided into three provinces, or so-called governments, all under the administration of one general governor: The condition of that vast country—so richly endowed by nature—was, notwithstanding, a sad one at the epoch of which we now write. Local administration was far from the centre of government, and consequently, during a lengthened period, had been remarkable for arbitrary measures. In these remote regions, bribes and other abuses of officials were carried on to a great extent—much more so than in many parts of the empire. During the brief period of two years which Speranski passed in Siberia, with his usual energy he strove to eradicate local abuses, and formed several projects in order to ameliorate administration. Among others, according to his suggestion, Siberia was divided into two governments, east and west.

Subsequent to the patriotic war, the remarkable aim at transformation, which had distinguished the first years of Alexander's reign, ceased. Even in the disposition of the emperor himself a great change had taken place. Experience and intercourse with various individuals had rendered him less confiding than before. From the epoch of the Congress of Vienna (20th October 1814), Alexander Pavlovitch paid more attention to outward policy, by maintaining the 'Sacred Alliance,' and by endeavouring to subdue revolutionary movements in Europe. Hence his constant participation in subsequent European congresses—

those of Troppau, Laybach, Verona. During this half of Alexander's reign, Count Araktscheev possessed much influence on inward politics. He took an active part in forming military colonies on property of peasants belonging to the crown (in Novgorod and some southern governments). Such colonies were according to the model of Austrian military boundaries, in order to diminish the expense of a regular army, and were to combine agriculture and military service. But, in practice, the institution did not justify its aim. (Ilovaiski, pp. 342-343.)

Among statesmen of Alexander's reign, Admiral Mordveenov is worthy of note. In the state council he constantly raised his voice against abuses, especially regarding the monopoly of wine.

Literature, during the reign of Alexander Pavlovitch, is remarkable by the appearance of a *History of the Russian State*, by the celebrated Karamzine. Unfortunately, the author died ere completing his work, so that it terminates at the so-called 'troublous times,' or epoch of anarchy, when the ancient dynasty of Rurik became extinct in the person of Feodor Ioannovitch, son of John the Terrible (1598), and the election of Michael Feodorovitch, first sovereign of the Romanov dynasty, took place in 1613.

Soloviev (p. 387) remarks, concerning Karamzine, that he was 'essentially a representative of Catherine's century, and all his views belonged to that epoch: discontent with the period of transformation, discontent with outward borrowed forms of western European civilisation, a longing for inward moral perfection, for revival, for mind, feeling, sensitiveness; finally, in consequence of the discontent of Peter's age, a natural sympathy for ancient Russia. All that which we observe in literature of Catherine's reign, we also find in Karamzine's *History of the Russian State*.'

The close of that celebrated work at the 'troublous times,' the want of an exact history of the seventeenth century, that bridge between ancient and modern Russia, for a lengthened period tended to spread the opinion that new Russian history is the consequence of a voluntary deviation from the ancient right way; when, in reality, it is the necessary result of ancient Russian historical life.

During the reign of Alexander I., another valuable historical work appeared in the form of Schletzer's *Nestor*, a model experiment of critical composition given to ancient Russian annals.

The talented and highly educated Schletzer was summoned to Russia by Müller during the latter half of the eighteenth century. Schletzer devoted his entire energy to the completion of the sources of Russian history, of which he became passionately fond. Notwithstanding, unpleasantness with the members of the academy obliged him to quit Russia. But, even among his numerous



occupations in Germany, he could not forget his old favourite, *Nestor*. Accordingly, his *Annals*, modernised, appeared in the nineteenth century.

## CHAPTER XLIX

### QUESTION CONCERNING SUCCESSION TO THE THRONE—MILITARY REVOLT OF DECEMBER 14, 1825

FROM the year 1820 a revolutionary movement had pervaded all Europe, and speedily assumed the form of secret societies. In Germany, this was particularly remarkable in universities, which had most important influence on the country. Towards the south, in the peninsulas of the Pyrenees and the Apennines, the said movement was prevalent in armies, and it was manifested in this especial form in Russia. There, during the latter years of Alexander I., two secret societies existed. One was in the north, in St. Petersburg. Another in the south was composed of officers who served in armies in these regions. But the two societies differed in aim; for while in the north speculations of limited monarchy were entertained, in the south many hoped to establish a republic. In both societies there were, however, determined individuals ready to adopt any extreme measures in order to effect a change of government.

Chopin even states that a project was formed to assassinate the sovereign.

Alexander I., when already in Taganrog, and immediately before his death, knew details of plans formed by members of the southern society. The emperor's decease, and the subsequent disturbance concerning the question of succession to the throne, suggested to the northern society the idea of executing its intentions by a military revolt.

The dispute regarding succession to the throne had risen in this wise. As the Emperor Alexander had no son, the next heir was the Grand Duke Constantine Pavlovitch. He, however, in 1820, had been divorced from his consort, the Grand Duchess Anna Feodorovna, and had married a Polish lady, Countess Joanna Grudzinska, of petty nobility, who afterwards received the title of Princess Lowicz. A law was likewise made, that if a prince of the imperial Russian family contracted a union with any one neither of royal nor ducal race, he could not transmit the rank of grand duchess to his consort, nor could their children lay claim to the throne. Now, Constantine Pavlovitch was exactly in this position, so that, by his second marriage, he gave up his right of succession to the throne of Russia (1822).

Then the emperor (August 16, 1823) issued a manifesto in which intimation



was made concerning Constantine's voluntary refusal of his rights, which were accordingly transmitted to his younger brother, Nikolai Pavlovitch.

The manifesto was carefully preserved in the Cathedral of the Assumption in Moscow. Three other copies were also kept respectively in the synod, in the senate, and in the state council, with the condition that, in case of the emperor's death, the manifesto preserved in the Assumption Cathedral and in the state council should be opened before any decision was made. Very few, however, knew of these arrangements. Even the Grand Duke Nikolai Pavlovitch himself had only vague ideas on the subject, and considered it by no means decided. It seems very extraordinary that a decree of so great importance should not have been made public; but we only record facts. When news of the emperor's death reached Warsaw, the Grand Duke Constantine distinctly intimated that he would not reign, but himself swore allegiance to his younger brother Nicholas as the new emperor. But in St. Petersburg the Grand Duke Nicholas knew nothing of the manifesto preserved in the Assumption Cathedral of Moscow, and of other decrees. He accordingly considered that his duty was to swear allegiance to his brother Constantine, and to receive the oath of others also to him. Even when Nicholas was informed of the late emperor's intentions, it was not deemed necessary to alter the oath given to Constantine, so that it was distributed by a ukaze of the senate to all parts of the empire. Meanwhile, a report was spread among the people that whether or not Constantine had really renounced his rights to the throne was not yet fully decided by the senate. Thus all felt doubt and alarm. During the interval, also, daily assemblages of secret societies took place in St. Petersburg. These assemblages were even permitted by the general governor, Count Miloradovitch, who was persuaded that they had merely a literary aim. But soon news reached St. Petersburg from Taganrog concerning a widespread conspiracy among armies in the south. In fact, from these very news the Emperor Alexander himself, only a few days before his death, ordered several individuals to be arrested. On December 12, the Grand Duke Nicholas received a letter from Constantine, in which the latter decidedly intimated his refusal of the throne; and then another manifesto was composed, to intimate the accession of Nicholas.

December 14 was the day fixed for the intimation of the new manifesto. On the previous evening members of the secret society resolved to act; but there was want of union and decision in their plans. On the morning of the 14th, when the armies of the guards were assembled in order to take the oath of allegiance, some of them showed resistance. Excited by the assurances of conspirators that the renunciation of Constantine was untrue, the soldiers seized their

arms, wounded several officers who tried to restrain them, and, with cries of 'Hurrah, Constantine!' rushed to the plain of the senate, accompanied by a mob, also shouting the same words, without understanding their meaning. To the word 'Constantine' was likewise added 'Constitution' (Konstitootia). Now, as the latter word in Russ is of the feminine gender, some of the ignorant vulgar imagined that 'Konstitootia' was the wife of Constantine. Count Miloradovitch rode towards the rebels and strove to reason with them, but fell mortally wounded. 'To survive fifty-two battles and to die thus!' exclaimed the old general, a hero of 1812. The rebels then began to fire; but those still loyal assembled round the emperor, who rode out to the plain. An attack of cavalry against the rebels had no success. The attempts of the clergy also to reason with the insubordinate were fruitless. The short December day was already drawing to a close, whereupon the emperor ordered the artillery to act; that forced the insurgents to flee, and the plain was soon cleared. During the following night some members of the secret society were arrested. On December 14 also the arrival of thirteen members of the southern society had taken place. But even these arrests did not prevent movements of conspirators in the south. They persisted in maintaining that Constantine had *not* renounced his rights, and summoned every Russian to defend him. The insurgents took Vasilkov and then Kiev, but were met and completely defeated by government troops. Subsequently the whole conspiracy was discovered. One hundred and twenty-one persons were found guilty, and five of them were hanged. (Soloviev, pp. 388-390.)

In Andréev's fascinating work entitled *Representatives of Power in Russia after Peter I.* (pp. 368-374), we find the following interesting account of events which preceded the accession of Nicholas I. to the throne:—

'Troubled agitation prevailed among those present in the court church of St. Petersburg when a courier from Taganrog brought news that the Emperor Alexander Pavlovitch was no more. In 1819 the Grand Duke Nikolai Pavlovitch knew that he was nominated heir to the throne after Alexander. Several individuals knew that also. But the emperor died in Taganrog. The Grand Duke Constantine Pavlovitch was in Warsaw. The state documents which indicated Nicholas heir to the throne were not published. To complete all that, it was a secret to none that both in the army and among many private individuals there was a widespread conspiracy against the existing government. In fact, the course of events was such as to render every one thoughtful.

There was no room for indecision. In the state council different opinions prevailed. The greater number of the members, aware of the late emperor's arrangements concerning succession to the throne after his death, were of

opinion that the lawful heir was Nikolai Pavlovitch. But the minister of justice—Prince Lobanov Rostovski—held the opinion ‘that the dead can have no will,’ consequently, that the throne belonged to Constantine Pavlovitch. As for Nicholas, he at once terminated the dispute by himself swearing allegiance to his elder brother Constantine, and by acknowledging him as emperor.

Thus a sort of interregnum took place. Constantine remained inflexible in his determination to renounce his rights to the throne, and reprimanded all who addressed him as ‘your majesty.’ On the other hand, Nicholas had sworn allegiance to his brother. Thereupon dignitaries, the inhabitants of St. Petersburg, and soon all Russia, did the same. The position of affairs increased agitation among the masses and augmented the difficulties of government concerning the conspiracy; for details of it were already known. An officer named Sherwood had disclosed all to the Emperor Alexander during the last days of his life. A sum of fifty-six thousand roubles, a house, the word ‘Faithful’ added to his family name, the rank of hereditary Russian nobleman, a coat-of-arms, a hand upraised, as if in the act of swearing allegiance (the hand surrounded by clouds), the motto ‘Faithful’—such were the rewards assigned to Sherwood. The ancestor of the latter was an Englishman, a certain John Sherwood, a mechanic, who came to Russia at an earlier date. But even these rewards do not prove that the general features of the conspiracy were unknown to the government at that period. Subsequently all details were discovered. When Sherwood’s denunciations were fully investigated, the Emperor Alexander could, however, take no part in what was going on, for he already lay unconscious on his death-bed. But at that time there was beside him a most energetic individual in the person of the little, round, hasty Deebitch—‘the field-marshal tea-urn,’ as he was familiarly denominated. On his own responsibility he undertook measures against the conspirators. The chief measure was the arrest of Paul Pestel, who was with his regiment in Little Russia. The arrest took place on December 14, and doubtless the government was indebted to that measure for the fact that the conspiracy of the army in the interior of Russia only came to an engagement on January 4, 1826, between a detachment led by Mooraviev-Apostol and Bestoojev-Rumine, on the way from Vasilkov to Kiev, and the division of General Rota. The encounter had, notwithstanding, no serious results. But at first none in St. Petersburg knew of the measures adopted by Deebitch. He was, however, subsequently rewarded by the Emperor Nicholas.

‘Prostrate yourself before your brother Constantine!’ exclaimed the empress-mother, Maria Feodorovna, in French, and addressing herself to Nikolai Pavlovitch, when news came from Warsaw that Constantine positively refused the



throne. 'He is worthy of honour, and is magnanimous in his inflexible determination to leave you the throne. Prostrate yourself before him!'

'But before I proceed to prostrate myself before him, as you say, mamma,' rejoined Nicholas, also in French, 'perhaps you will be so kind as to explain to me the reason why I should do so; as I do not know which makes the greater sacrifice in similar circumstances—he who refuses, or he who accepts.'

And Nikolai Pavlovitch was right. He accepted the throne in exceedingly difficult circumstances. There seemed no doubt that the new reign would commence with a drama, perhaps even a tragedy; and what part would he enact in either? That was still undecided.

And, sure enough, Nikolai Pavlovitch soon learned more fully all the difficulty of the part which had fallen to his lot.

A lieutenant of the Hunters' Guards, named Yakov (James) Rostovtzev, wrote a letter to the new emperor and disclosed the plan of the conspiracy. Afterwards he had an interview with Nikolai Pavlovitch. Rostovtzev, however, begged one great favour, and it was, that no reward would be given for his disclosures. The emperor granted the favour; and until 1835 Rostovtzev remained only as an insignificant officer.

The communication of Rostovtzev meanwhile produced agitation among the conspirators. 'If the sheaths are ripped up, we can no longer conceal our swords,' was their device at that time. They accordingly decided to make haste. But the new emperor also took precautions. An oath of allegiance to him must ensue. 'I bless and decide!' exclaimed Philaret, metropolitan of Moscow—as is reported in tradition—when after the first oath sworn to Constantine, another was demanded to Nicholas. Capital cities and then all Russia swore allegiance to the new emperor. But, as had been anticipated, a critical day in St. Petersburg was that on which the guards were to take the oath, *i.e.* on December 14.

Great alarm prevailed in the palace and in the imperial family when reports came that the discontented and those who had sworn allegiance to Constantine had assembled on the Isaac's Plain. Then the young emperor intimated his intention to appear on the spot, and either to return to the palace as sovereign of Russia, or to die in asserting his rights. On previous occasions, Nicholas had also shown firmness of character. On learning what was passing in different regiments already, previous to taking the oath, he had summoned their generals to his presence and had asked them, 'Did they acknowledge him emperor?' An affirmative reply ensued. Then Nicholas stepped backwards, his figure

erect, his head held high. 'If so,' rejoined he, 'you at this moment answer with your head for the fidelity of your troops.'

History proves that at a critical moment firmness of disposition is more important than a host of partisans. And so it was in the present instance. The bravery of Nicholas obtained adherents to him, even among those who, in other circumstances, would have joined the conspirators.

In brilliant military uniform, with a ribbon across his shoulder, and without an overcoat, in spite of the cold, the handsome young emperor rode forth from the Winter Palace to subdue the rebels. Nikolai Pavlovitch was of remarkable personal beauty, and his form was symmetry itself. A crowd of soldiers at the monument of Peter I. was gradually augmented by others, who came from various parts of the city, but, notwithstanding, did not amount to more than a tenth of those assembled against them. The troops still loyal surrounded the insurgents. But although this was the case, one detachment of the latter still extended even to the Winter Palace. That detachment met the emperor himself. 'To whom do you swear allegiance?' said Nicholas, addressing the foremost soldiers. 'To Constantine,' was the reply. 'Then go there,' rejoined the emperor, pointing to the statue of Peter I.

The whole plain was filled by an excited crowd. The emperor, while riding onwards, met the historian Karamzine, then in failing health. His dress was in disorder, and he was without a hat. He hastened towards Nicholas, and then went to the Winter Palace. There, in terror and expectation, awaited the two empresses—Maria Feodorovna, mother of the emperor, and Alexandra Feodorovna, his consort. Karamzine was the only witness of that terrible moment endured by the princesses when a son and a husband went forth to face an unknown future. On news of the disturbance, the infant heir to the throne—subsequently Alexander II.—had been hastily brought from the Anitchkov Palace, and was safely guarded in the Winter Palace by a detachment of Finland archers.

Meanwhile the emperor rode onwards among the people, who everywhere received him with respect. But when exhortations were vain, and when General Miloradovitch was killed, a suspicious excitement appeared among the crowd. It was evident that the example of obstinacy had a bad effect on the masses. When the Horse Guards, who made an attack, were repulsed because their horses were not suitably shod for frozen pavements, and consequently slipped, some near the emperor kept on their hats. Nicholas saw the unfavourable impression produced on the people. 'Hats off!' shouted he, and the hats immediately fell. Danger evidently did not threaten from that quarter. But in



another it did. The emperor's younger brother, Michael Pavlovitch, was only saved by three sailors, who succeeded in knocking a pistol from the hands of Koohelbeker.

It is more than probable that Nikolai Pavlovitch also incurred danger. From the surrounding crowd an officer, with a black band on his head, approached the emperor. The officer was Yakoobovitch. It was afterwards said that he held a dagger concealed. Yakoobovitch was one of the conspirators who thirsted for blood, and was only restrained by more moderate associates from putting his sanguinary plans into execution. A man of thought, and in no wise a red-hot revolutionary, was Rilée. It is reported that, on his knees, he besought Yakoobovitch to abandon his desperate plan of assassinating the sovereign. That was even during the life of Alexander I. Rilée threatened to inform against Yakoobovitch, or even to kill him, if he continued obstinate. On the day of the revolt, Yakoobovitch's plan was to send the drunken mob to devastate the palace; but Rilée again prevented that, and the head police-master of St. Petersburg had ordered that on December 14 all the vodka (Russian corn-brandy) should be poured into a ditch, as if he anticipated the possibility of excess.

At length the ominous sound of firing was heard, which indicated that the insurgents refused to submit. For many years afterwards that firing left a trace on one member of the imperial family. The two empresses had been informed that a discharge of artillery would only take place in the event of non-submission to the emperor. When his mother, Maria Feodorovna, heard the roar of cannon at a very short distance from the palace, she threw herself on her knees. Alexandra Feodorovna, the emperor's consort, was in an agony of terror; and, according to Grimm, so great was the shock she experienced, that during her whole life afterwards she had a nervous twitching of the face.

Several months subsequent to that fatal day, the Duke of Wellington was sent by the English government as the royal representative at the coronation of the Emperor Nicholas. Once the duke asked Nikolai Pavlovitch in conversation what the young empress felt at the critical moment of the revolt on December 14. It is said that the duke wanted tact. Certainly, but a little consideration might have made him feel that he had touched a sensitive chord in the emperor's heart by alluding to so delicate a subject. Nicholas at first gave no reply. But the duke did not understand the intentional silence, and repeated the question.

When angry, the emperor's features had a ferocious expression. A dark cloud crossed his countenance as he answered: 'What did the empress feel, my



lord duke, at that moment? Nearly what you yourself felt when Blücher had not yet come to aid you at Waterloo!’

The reply was caustic; but the duke had provoked it.

Let us, however, return to the events of December 14, 1825. The revolt was quelled. Nikolai Pavlovitch returned to the palace as emperor, whose right none disputed. There he met Prince Troobetzkoï, pale and confused. But lately he had been the head of the conspirators, the most influential member of the northern society, and its supposed dictator. A feeling akin to contempt appeared on the emperor’s countenance when the head and guide of the conspiracy repented and now implored that his life might be spared. Nicholas ordered him to sit down and write the following laconic letter to his wife: ‘I am well, and will continue to be well!’ In this wise the life of Troobetzkoï was spared.

As for the soldiers who had participated in the revolt, they were sent to the Caucasus, there to merit pardon by fighting against the mountaineers.

## CHAPTER I

### REIGN OF THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS I. (NIKOLAI PAVLOVITCH), 1825–1855

THE internal policy of this reign is distinguished by a strictly conservative character. While retaining institutions of the state, inherited from predecessors, the government of Nikolai Pavlovitch continued to expand several particular branches of these institutions, especially the edition of a code of laws.

We have already seen that from the reign of Peter the Great till that of Nicholas I., each successive sovereign had undertaken extensive legislative labour, notwithstanding it had failed to attain its chief aim, or, in other words, the formation of a new code. Meanwhile, the more Russian society was developed, the greater want was felt, not only of suitable laws, but even of a proper collection of them. Hence much difficulty and many abuses ensued. The delay in judging affairs was extreme. It was calculated that in the various judicial tribunals of the empire two millions eight hundred and fifty thousand law-pleas had accumulated. A hundred and twenty-seven thousand individuals under judgment were shut up in prison. From the year 1821, in the government of Koursk alone, six hundred and sixty ukazes of the senate had not been executed. Local revenues had not been verified for many years, and the accounts were full of inaccuracy (Soloviev, p. 391). The emperor at once took legislative labour into his own inspection, and confided it to one who had endeavoured to

form a code during the reign of Alexander I. We allude to Michael Michaelovitch Speranski. Not only was he experienced, but he had learned much from the very failure of his plans. The project of forming a code was decided. Not only so: it was also decreed that a collection of laws already existing should at once be made. In order to accomplish this, all laws were collected, commencing with those of Alexei Michaelovitch. Thus in 1830 a complete copy of all laws of the Russian empire was published, and in 1833 a code appeared of laws already existing. Finally, in 1835, a special penal code was issued, particularly for correctional punishment or that of capital crime. Ukazes subsequently issued were collected in separate volumes, and joined to the chief collection as a continuation.

We have seen that Peter the Great had introduced an obligatory law of entail, which was abolished during the reign of Anna Ioannovna. While Nikolai Pavlovitch occupied the throne, that law could be made according to desire. In order to prevent tradesmen from becoming nobles by means of service to the state, so-called 'citizens of note' were created. For the convenience of tradesmen a commercial court of justice was formed.

As regards public instruction, new regulations were made. Two institutions were founded: one for professors, in order to educate youths abroad, so that they themselves might eventually become professors; another for pedagogues, where teachers for schools were educated. Instead of the university of Vilna, which had been closed, another—that of St. Vladimir—was opened in Kiev. A military academy, an institution for jurisprudence, a technical institution, were also founded. However, in 1848, particular measures, occasioned by circumstances, were adopted concerning public instruction. The number of those admitted to universities was limited. The custom of sending youths abroad for education was discontinued. In universities the chair of philosophy was suppressed.

#### EXTERIOR POLICY—WAR WITH PERSIA—WAR WITH TURKEY

Among events of exterior policy at this epoch, an important place is occupied by the war with Persia concerning boundaries (1826-1828). General Paskevitch, then appointed commander-in-chief of the Russian armies at the Caucasus, became famous. His victories at the taking of Erevani and at Elizavetpol were especially remarkable. By a peace concluded at Turkmentschai, Fet-Ali-Shah ceded to Russia the khanates of Erivan and Nachetchivask, and paid a contribution of 20,000,000 roubles.

The Persian war, however, had not even terminated, when Russia was involved

1827—Battle  
of Navarino.

1828-1829.

in another struggle with Turkey, in consequence of protection shown by the Russian emperor to Greeks who had revolted against Turkish sway. In October 1827, the Russians participated in the famous battle of Navarino in the haven of that name. There the Turkish-Egyptian fleet was destroyed by English, French, and Russian vessels. Russian armies, under command of Count Vittenstein, entered the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia, crossed the Danube, and took possession of Varna during the spring of 1828. In the following year, Count Deebitch, the new commander of the army, defeated the grand vizier, crossed the Balkan mountains, and occupied Adrianople. Meanwhile, in Asia, Paskevitch took the forts of Kars and Ahaltzeets, and occupied Erzeroum, the capital of Turkish Armenia. Then the sultan, Mahmoud II., concluded peace with Russia in Adrianople in 1829. He ceded to Russia the eastern shores of the Black Sea, declared Moldavia, Wallachia, and Servia under Russian protection, opened free passage to Russian vessels in the Danube and in the Dardanelles, and acknowledged the independence of the kingdom of Greece.

1849.

Concerning European powers, the Emperor Nicholas, with his usual firmness, retained the commencement of the 'Sacred Alliance.' Thus, in 1849, when France, Germany, and Italy were convulsed by revolutionary movements, Russian armies marched forward to aid Austria against an insurrection of the Hungarians, who were speedily subdued. (Ilovaïski, pp. 346-347.)

## CHAPTER LI

### INSURRECTION IN POLAND, 1830—ENTERPRISES IN VOLHYNIA AND LITHUANIA

IN 1815 the Emperor Alexander I., by a grant charter, had secured to the kingdom of Poland a separate political organisation (very liberal for that epoch), including a national diet and armies formed of Poles. Thanks to that organisation and inward tranquillity, the material prosperity of Poland began to be developed. In a word, agriculture, trade, industry, and literature, during the space of fifteen years, made remarkable progress. Notwithstanding, among the people, among students and in the army, secret societies were formed, whose objects were to excite the public mind and to aim at the restoration of total national independence. (Ilovaïski, p. 347.)

1830.

As we have seen, Russia was on friendly terms with France. That intercourse, and the amicable relationship of Prussia, constantly restrained the unfriendly designs of Austria and England. But in 1830 the revolution of July overthrew the elder branch of the Bourbons from the throne of France, and occasioned a change



in intercourse between that country and Russia. The new government of Louis-Philippe of Orleans, as the result of a revolution, from that very cause alone could in no wise obtain the favour of the Emperor Nicholas, constantly favourable to the conservative principle; and all the more so because, in consequence of the French revolution, similar disturbance had ensued in other countries, particularly in Poland.

Indeed, the Poles soon forgot the magnanimity of the Emperor Alexander Pavlovitch, who committed to oblivion the aid given by Poland to Napoleon in his war with Russia. Not only so: the privileges granted to Poland by Alexander urged the Poles to dream of a period when their country would become an independent, powerful state. The chief aims of Polish patriots were to effect greater separation from Russia, and to enlarge their own kingdom by joining to it the western provinces restored to Catherine II. These aims were doubtless favoured by the fact that the primitive Russian population in the said provinces belonged to the lower orders, chiefly serfs. As for proprietors and those of a better-educated class, they chiefly consisted of Polish nobles who professed the faith of Rome. The system of education in Poland, too, at the commencement of the nineteenth century, had certainly an influence on subsequent events. By the efforts of Prince Adam Tschartoreiski, curator of the educational district of Vilna, the number of schools in Lithuanian and White Russian districts had greatly augmented. The teachers there were, besides, Poles, and instruction was conducted in a Polish spirit. The educational district of Vilna included nearly the whole of western Russia; and the academy of Vilna had been promoted to a university by Alexander I. in 1803. In south-western regions, Count Thadeus Tschatzki was inspector of institutions in the governments of Kiev, Podolia, and Volhynia. The chief object of his care was the foundation of the Kremenetz gymnasium, subsequently formed into a lyceum.

Meanwhile, secret societies gradually urged the Poles to resistance. In the diet of Warsaw, which met once in two years, open opposition was shown to Russian government. Revolutionary movements in western Europe, especially in Spain and in Italy, augmented the agitation in Poland. At length the revolution of July in Paris revived hope of aid from France, and hastened the action of the Poles. Among them, individuals more moderate and wiser, although they doubted success, had, notwithstanding, too little courage to oppose the popular revolutionary party, chiefly formed of the military and students. The moderates, accordingly, in silence left the field of action to the revolutionists.

During the night of November 17, a crowd of conspirators (composed chiefly 1830. of pupils from the military school) rushed to the palace of Belvedere, occupied

by the viceroy of Poland, the Grand Duke Constantine Pavlovitch. The grand duke had succeeded in saving himself, on seeing that the Polish armies took the part of the insurgents. Constantine Pavlovitch then withdrew to Warsaw.

At first the insurrection was inconsiderable, and the greater part of the Polish regiments remained faithful to the government. But the Polish officers immediately near the grand duke assured him that the disturbance in the streets had arisen 'from the erroneous idea of the people and the armies that the Russians had attacked the Poles and were putting them to death. So, to quiet them, it was better for the Russians not to interfere, and thus to prove that they had been calumniated.' (Ilovaiski, p. 348.)

Accordingly, during that night the Russians were restrained from energetic action; and on the following day the insurrection had already become general.

Constantine Pavlovitch thereupon assembled the Russian armies in a neighbouring village. In it there appeared a Polish deputation for conference. The deputies were Princes Tschartoreiski and Loobetzki, Count Ostrovski and the historian Leleyvel. After various explanations, the deputies demanded the restoration of ancient Polish provinces. The grand duke was amazed at so strange a demand, and for some minutes did not answer a word. Then he coldly replied: 'I am not authorised by my brother to talk of that subject.'

Soon the insurrection spread all over the kingdom and penetrated even to Lithuania. The commander-in-chief of the Polish armies and the dictator at the commencement of the struggle was General Hlopitzki, who had formerly fought under the banners of Kostiooshko. The Emperor Nikolai Pavlovitch then sent a force of a hundred thousand men to Poland. The commander of that army, Count Deebitch, gained a bloody battle at the village of Grochov, near Warsaw; but, as he did not immediately make a decided attack on the capital, the Polish army had time to recover and to supply its loss. General Skjinetzki, who had replaced the severely wounded Hlopitzki, thought, by an unexpected blow, to annihilate the corps of Russian guards, who occupied a separate position between the Narev and the Boog, under the command of the Grand Duke Michael Pavlovitch. Field-marshal Deebitch-Zabalkanski, with the chief army, hastened to the relief of the guards, and gained a second obstinate battle with the Poles before Ostrolenka. Subsequently he died of cholera, which was then raging in Russia. That fatal malady had another distinguished victim in the person of the Grand Duke Constantine Pavlovitch. Deebitch's place was then occupied by Count Paskevitch Erivanski.

Chopin, in his *Histoire de Russie*, states that public report imputed the death of Deebitch to poison administered by General Orlov. The latter had been sent



to the army by the emperor. Chopin, however, adds that there is no proof of the said suspicion; and that Deebitch, already ill, probably died from the effects of a drinking revel. The Princess Lowicz, second consort of the Grand Duke Constantine Pavlovitch, soon after his death was also carried off by cholera.

#### ENTERPRISES IN VOLHYNIA AND LITHUANIA

Enterprises in Volhynia and Lithuania form remarkable episodes of this war.

Secret societies and constant intercourse with revolutionists in Warsaw had gradually influenced the minds of Polish Romanist nobles in western Russian governments. Youths belonging to the petty nobility only awaited the appearance of Polish armies in order to act openly, and promised to raise a revolt in the whole country. To effect these aims, General Dvernitzki's detachment was sent from the kingdom of Poland to Volhynia and to Podolia. But the hope of powerful aid in these provinces was disappointed. Russian peasants in no wise showed inclination to join the revolt, but even opposed it. Only small detachments of the petty nobility were formed, augmented by the followers of nobles. Besides, in Volhynia, General Dvernitzki met an able adversary in the person of General Reediger. The Polish commander was soon obliged to rush towards the Austrian frontiers and to enter Galicia, where his soldiers were discerned by Austrians.

The enterprise undertaken in Lithuania was much more considerable, particularly towards the north, *i.e.* in Jmood and Samogitia. There, Polish proprietors successfully formed bands of Lithuanian peasants, belonging to the same religion as themselves. Proprietors were likewise aided by the Romish clergy, who abused their influence over the village population. These bands began to ravish all that was Russian; and, in case of defeat on the open field, they sought refuge in their extensive impenetrable forests. A corps of regular Polish forces, under command of Gelwood, was sent to aid the sedition in Lithuania, but, after entering its capital, Vilna, was repulsed, so that the second expedition terminated as unsuccessfully as that of Dvernitzki.

During this interval, there was disunion in the Polish camp. Two parties were formed there. One was aristocratic, at the head of which was Prince Adam Tschartoreeiski. Another was democratic. One of its leaders was the historian Leleyvel, professor of the university of Vilna.

Such was the state of affairs when the Russian commander Paskevitch was gradually advancing towards Warsaw with his troops. Before storming the capital, he, however, endeavoured to make peace. The Poles were distinctly told that if they immediately acknowledged the Emperor Nicholas as king, and did



not insist on western Russian provinces being added to Poland, all other demands might easily be granted. The Poles, notwithstanding, replied that they had taken up arms for the independence of their country, according to boundaries of ancient times, and comprising land conquered from Russia. 'To such conditions one can only reply by cannon shots!' exclaimed the Russian commander.

1831-1832. Skjinetzki and his successors, Malachovski, Dembrinski, etc., were unable to prevent the advance of Russian troops towards Warsaw. Accordingly, on August 25, 1831, Paskevitch stormed Volio, a suburb of the city. Next day, after desperate opposition, Warsaw also surrendered. Thus the revolt was subdued, and its chief leaders fled abroad. In 1832 the grant charter of the Emperor Alexander I. was abolished, and the kingdom of Poland was henceforth incorporated as part of the Russian empire, and on equal footing with its other districts. The universities of Warsaw and Vilna were closed, as was also the lyceum of Kremenetzki. Two years after this epoch, the university of St. Vladimir, in Kiev, was opened for western governments. (Ilovaiski, pp. 349-350.)

1834.

## CHAPTER LII

### THE 'UNITED GREEKS' JOIN THE EASTERN CHURCH

1839.

AFTER the Polish insurrection had been subdued, a most important measure effected in western Russia was the abolition of the 'Union.'

Even during the reign of Catherine II., when western districts were restored to Russia, many United Greeks showed a strong desire to join the Eastern church, and not a few did so. But, at the close of the eighteenth century, that movement ceased. The administration of United churches was confided to a Roman Catholic college, instituted in St. Petersburg for Romanists of the Russian empire. However, about two millions of inhabitants still continued United Greeks. The Poles did all in their power to convert these Unionists to Catholicism. But even in the United church discord reigned. The white clergy (*i.e.* priests) constantly complained of harassment from the United monks of the Basilianski order. For the Basilians seized the best church property, and, in general, were zealous allies of Catholicism.

During the reign of Nikolai Pavlovitch, great attention was paid to church affairs in western regions. The best individuals among the United clergy began to favour union with the Pravoslavni (Russo-Greek) church. The chief upholder of this plan was Joseph Siemashko, subsequently metropolitan of Lithuania. He was aided by Bloodov, minister of the interior. In 1828, in order to administer

affairs of the United Greek church, the emperor had instituted a special United Greek college, presided over by the United Greek metropolitan. Most of the Basilianski monasteries were closed, and a special seminary (at Jirovitzach, near Slonime, government of Grodno) was founded for the education of the United clergy. At the same time, efforts were made in the United church to purify the service from a mixture of Romish rites, and also gradually to prepare the way for union with the Pravoslavni.

The Polish insurrection hastened that union (1831). Yet the Catholic party did all in its power to oppose the movement. Proprietors, too, making use of their power over serfs, endeavoured to dissuade the latter from joining the Eastern church. Then the decision was taken to abolish the Union by a solemn act of administration.

In 1839 a large number of United Greek priests and clergy assembled in Polotzk, where they composed an exact description of their church, and, at the same time, begged the emperor to include them along with the Pravoslavni Russians. To that petition the following confirmation was given:—The Union should still retain the episcopate of Holm, in the kingdom of Poland; and, beyond the boundaries of Russia, the Russian United Greek church should exist in Galicia.

Furthermore, in order to guarantee the village population—chiefly Russian and Pravoslavni in western provinces—from the oppression of Polish Catholic nobles, a so-called ‘inventory of the position’ was issued. Distinct statements were made concerning the obligations of peasants and the rights of proprietors regarding the labour of serfs. The ‘inventory’ was first introduced in Kiev by aid of the general governor, Bibikov. But in the governments of White Russia and Lithuania 1847. this new regulation did not appear before the commencement of the following reign.

## CHAPTER LIII

THE CRIMEAN WAR, 1853—THE CAUCASUS—DEATH OF THE EMPEROR NIKOLAI  
PAVLOVITCH, 18TH FEBRUARY 1855

A NEW rupture between Russia and Turkey soon ensued. The cause of dispute was precedence at the holy places of Jerusalem. Russia favoured the claims of 1853. Greek Christians in Palestine, and maintained their rights. The Porte, however, refused the demands of the Emperor Nicholas. Accordingly, Russian armies, commanded by Prince Gortschakov, crossed the boundaries and occupied the principalities of Moldavia and Wallachia (1853). During the same year, the

Russian fleet in the Black Sea, under command of Admiral Nacheemov, destroyed a Turkish squadron at Sinope. England and France were, however, alarmed for the existence of Turkey, and sent it aid both in arms and by a fleet, with a view to maintain the equilibrium of Europe. Sardinia also joined them. Austria, although it had been saved by Russian aid against the Hungarian insurrection, likewise assumed a threatening position towards Russia. The latter state had accordingly a struggle with four powers. The allies, making use of a large fleet, appeared in nearly all Russian seas, at the Baltic, the Black, the White seas, and at the shores of Kamtschatka. The chief scene of action was, however, in the south. In September 1854, the Russian armies evacuated the principalities, and returned by crossing the Pruth. But, at the same time, a powerful Anglo-French fleet landed forces of the allies in the Crimea, at Eupatoria. Prince Menshikov, chief commander of the Russian forces, gave a battle on the banks of the Alma, but was defeated. The enemy, by sea and land, then besieged Sevastopol, in whose haven the fleet of the Black Sea was shut up. During the space of eleven months, an obstinate, bloody struggle was carried on at Sevastopol. In its defence, the Russian engineer Totleben was particularly distinguished; and, amongst seamen, the admirals Korneelov and Nacheemov, both of whom fell in battle. Attempts of Russian generals to storm the Anglo-French camp on the heights of Inkerman, and at the Black Stream (Tschernaia Rietschka), terminated unsuccessfully; and the Russian army, which had always been an object of peculiar care and interest to the Emperor Nicholas, fought with its usual courage and self-sacrifice. But the allies were favoured by superior knowledge in the art of war, as well as by better arms and more complete means of communication. For example, while the allies easily obtained supplies by means of their fleet, at that epoch intercourse between central Russia and the Crimea, through vast steppes, was merely carried on by simple roads. For Russia had then only one railway, that between St. Petersburg and Moscow.

1854.  
1855—Death  
of Nicholas I.,  
18th Feb-  
ruary.

During the siege of Sevastopol, 18th February 1855, the Emperor Nicholas I. died, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Alexander II.

War was meanwhile continued with unabating vigour.

On August 27, after a frightful bombardment of three weeks and a desperate attack, the French took possession of the Malachov heights, *i.e.* the chief defence of Sevastopol. Meanwhile, in Asia Minor, towards the southern boundaries of the Caucasus, Russian arms had nearly constant success in engagements with the Turks. The conquest of the fort of Kars, by General Mooraviev, hastened the conclusion of peace. At length, war terminated by the peace of Paris, March 18, 1856. Conquests on both sides were returned. The mouths of the Danube were,

1856—Peace  
of Paris,  
March 18.



however, assigned to Turkey. The Black Sea was declared neutral and free to trading vessels of all nations.

The finances of the Russian empire, even at the epoch of the continental system, were in an embarrassed condition. War from 1828 till 1831 still more deranged them. But during a subsequent period of peace, prolonged for sixteen years, thanks to the efforts of Count Kankrine, minister of finance, things began to amend. The value of bank-notes was raised, and metal currency was abundant. The Crimean war, as a struggle between three of the most powerful nations, of course demanded 1856. great efforts and sacrifices. But, from a moral point of view, that war was beneficial to Russia by showing its social wants. Thus, with a new reign, amelioration began. A new epoch in Russian history was at hand. Besides the above-mentioned war, the reign of Nicholas I. is distinguished by an incessant struggle with the mountaineer races of the Caucasus.

Towards the close of Paul's reign, the sovereign of Georgia, George XII., on dying, left his kingdom to the Russian emperor. Thus Georgia was annexed to Russia. Then the chain of the Caucasus appeared among Russian possessions; and a constant strife was carried on with the mountaineer races there. At first the Russians contented themselves with defensive movements against the repeated attacks of marauding robbers. General Ermolov was appointed commander-in-chief of the Russian forces (1816), and gradually their power became extended in these regions. Notwithstanding, Russian progress was hindered by the appearance of a new Mussulman sect, called Muridism, which, about the period of 1830, began to spread quickly among the mountaineer population of the Caucasus. In this wise many hitherto petty, scattered tribes became united in a general religious fanaticism. Among leaders of Muridism the most powerful and dangerous to Russia was Shamyl, who had assumed the distinguished clerical title of Imam. Harassed in many directions, the Russians were forced to augment their numbers considerably, and likewise to carry on an arduous, obstinate struggle with the formidable imam. It was in vain that, from time to time, Russian armies formed expeditions in various mountainous directions, burned and devastated tented villages of the Tscherkass tribes. These excursions were merely occasional, and the subjection of the native races advanced slowly. Solid progress was only effected when dense forests were all cut down, and when more regular, constant attacks were made. Meanwhile the influence of Muridism was considerably enfeebled; and the mountain races began to grow tired of their despotic imam. Finally, in 1859, Shamyl, besieged in his impregnable village fort of Gooneb, 1859. surrendered as a prisoner of war to Prince Bariatinski, viceroy of the Caucasus; and all the eastern part of these regions thereupon submitted to Russia. Shamyl

subsequently lived in Russia, and his son was educated in a Russian military school. (Ilovaiski, pp. 354-355.)

## CHAPTER LIV

### NIKOLAI PAVLOVITCH AS A SOVEREIGN

THE third son of the Emperor Paul was not educated in childhood and early youth with the idea that he would ascend the throne of Russia. Had this been so, there is no doubt that much in his first training would have been different. But gradually Nicholas became accustomed to the prospect of wearing the crown, and accordingly he began to prepare for that exalted position. His attempts at self-improvement were also doubtless much aided (Andréev states, p. 375) by the influence of an enlightened, well-educated consort. Nikolai Pavlovitch, however, foresaw all the difficulty of his future career. Moreover, he was noble-minded enough to feel no shame of his desire to learn.

Andréev likewise continues to remark (p. 376): 'In order fully to understand the spirit prevalent during the reign of Nikolai Pavlovitch, we must pay special attention to the circumstances under which he ascended the throne. That important act, at the very commencement, was stamped by a sad drama, which could not fail to cast a shadow on the future. For, scarcely had the young sovereign openly claimed his rights, when he was at the same time obliged to use severe measures. Let us also not forget that previous to the reign of Nikolai Pavlovitch, Araktschéev had, for nearly fourteen years, been chief ruler in Russia; and his sternness was well known. The star of Araktschéev, notwithstanding, set when the young emperor ascended the throne; and henceforth the person nearest the sovereign was Kleinmichel, Araktschéev's former secretary. In fact, Nikolai Pavlovitch chose new individuals who had nothing in common with Araktschéev's time. There is also no doubt that the personality of Nikolai Pavlovitch soon subdued surrounding advisers, so that they merely became the fulfillers of his will.'

During the reign of Nicholas I., three words stamped on the standards of interior policy were—*Pravoslavie* (the Russo-Greek religion), *Autocracy*, *Nationality*. For religion and government cannot fail to go hand in hand. Religion maintains 'the powers that be,'—and they, in turn, uphold religion. That is an old truth. An absolute sovereign, like the Emperor Nicholas, could not do otherwise than preserve '*Pravoslavie*.'

As for nationality, the third word inscribed on the new emperor's standard,



he himself was quite Russian, both in education and in his mode of life. He could not bear slavish imitation of all that was foreign. Of course, the sovereign's individuality influenced the character of his government. 'Documents presented to a Russian emperor should be written in Russ,' remarked Nikolai Pavlovitch, during the first period of his reign, on one occasion, when Count Kankrine transmitted an account of finances written in French. Not only so: Nikolai Pavlovitch did not favour travelling of Russians in foreign countries. When Tschitschagov presented the permission of the late emperor to live in France, Nikolai Pavlovitch erased Tschitschagov's name from the list of state councillors. In answer to that, Tschitschagov returned the document, which entitled him to receive a pension of fifty thousand roubles. In fact, passports to go abroad were not obtained without considerable difficulty. Nobleinen were not permitted to remain longer than five years in foreign countries; merchants, not more than three years. Certainly, to preserve nationality alone was not the only motive which urged these measures.

Subsequent to the war of 1812 Russia occupied a primary position in military affairs among Continental powers. Thus the Emperor Nicholas to a certain degree might, like his brother Alexander I., decide the fate of Europe. But at this epoch, western states, particularly England, strictly observed all the political movements of Russia with regard to its neighbours. Indeed, a dread of the 'Northern Colossus' had augmented with the increase of Russia's military power, subsequent to the fall of Napoleon. (Andréev, pp. 376-377.)

When Nikolai Pavlovitch ascended the throne (1825), the Caucasus was a 1825. constant military school for the Russians, but a school which cost Russia very dear. The emperor on one occasion took Shamyl's little son—then a cadet—in his arms, and remarked to some Russian officers who were examining the corps, that 'Shamyl had confided the education of his son to a Russian sovereign.' Shamyl's exploits had, however, demanded great sacrifices. It is calculated that during the reign of Nikolai Pavlovitch the Caucasus annually cost Russia twenty thousand soldiers. (Andréev, p. 379.)

But although Nikolai Pavlovitch was a thoroughly Russian man, totally averse to slavish imitation of every foreign usage, he, notwithstanding, was in no wise averse to profit by new inventions, especially those likely to benefit his own country. Andréev (p. 380), in fact, mentions that the emperor himself rode in the first St. Petersburg omnibus, in order to show that such a mode of conveyance might be adopted by others save those of the lower orders.

In 1840 the emperor had a dispute with Count Kankrine concerning the project of making a railway between St. Petersburg and Moscow. Nikolai Pavlovitch



was much in favour of the railway. Yet all his ministers opposed it. Only one—Kleinmichel—was on the emperor's side. Kankrine, as minister of finance, might surely have foreseen the immense advantage of railways to Russia. Notwithstanding, he was their greatest opponent. Indeed, he openly declared that the railway was 'downright stupidity; and that in twenty years hence there would not be one railway in all the Russian empire.' Let us, however, not forget that the opinion was expressed in 1840. Andréev (p. 381), moreover, ridicules Count Kankrine, and affirms that he wished to adopt various professions—those of M.D., architect, man of letters, minister of finance—and was exceedingly angry when doctors made him understand that he was a bad physician, or when architects thought his plans incorrect.

As for his literary attainments, their inferiority is proved by his compositions. Concerning his ability as minister of finance, he was merely useful as far as economy was regarded; and it certainly was absolutely necessary at the epoch of which we now write. Kankrine was accordingly rewarded by Nikolai Pavlovitch in a regal manner; for the emperor used often to say that 'ingratitude is the most hideous of all vices.'

It is said that Kankrine, when already a count and in receipt of four hundred thousand roubles per annum, was still economical in his habits, and desired to introduce economy in Russian finances. Unfortunately for Russia, notwithstanding, they were administered by one possessed of little foresight, and besides opposed to new inventions. As minister of finance, Kankrine might have undertaken the construction of the first Russian railway. Thus the American, Wistler, would perhaps not have been appointed to execute so important a plan; and perhaps also the railway would not have cost the Russian treasury the colossal sum of a hundred and twenty millions of roubles! (Andréev, p. 381.)

Events which occurred in France during the year 1830 could, of course, in no wise obtain favour in the eyes of an autocratic sovereign like Nikolai Pavlovitch. When the French ambassador told the emperor that Thiers and Guizot were the right and left hands of King Louis-Philippe, Nikolai Pavlovitch replied that, from the way in which business was conducted, the king had evidently two left hands.

Among nations in which prevailed the order of things introduced by the 'Sacred Alliance,' preparations were made for war against France. Prussia prepared to do so, and awaited aid from Russia. Field-marshal Deebitch—already surnamed 'Zabalkanski'—was then in Berlin, in order to carry on conferences. He was dining with the king when the latter received news of the insurrection in Warsaw.

'Field-marshal, have you heard of the revolt in Warsaw, where, according to your own account, there is a force of a hundred thousand men, whom you promised us to act against France?' said the king to Deebitch.

It is known that after the insurrection the Poles declared that among the papers of the Grand Duke Constantine Pavlovitch, some proved that Russia was then prepared for a struggle with France.

When the ashes of Napoleon I. were transported to his own country from St. Helena, the Emperor Nicholas offered the French government a block of the best porphyry, to place on Napoleon's tomb. Reverence for his memory was as an arm against the Orleans dynasty in the hands of its opponent. Nikolai Pavlovitch had the highest opinion of Napoleon's talents. The Russian emperor's proposal was accepted with gratitude.

Then came the memorable year of 1848. At that epoch Russia aided in subduing the revolutionary movement in Hungary; but Hungarian patriots maintained that Russian money, rather than forces, had done so. In 1849, however, Austria acted in an unseemly manner towards Russia. A solemn promise had been made to the Russian commander, Paskevitch that the lives of the Hungarian generals who had commanded the insurgents should be spared. But the promise was not kept. The generals were executed. Ever afterwards, Paskevitch could not without horror hear the name of the Austrian general Hainau, and called him 'a murderer.' We note also the words of the Emperor Nicholas at Warsaw, near the monument of John Sobeiski: 'Sobeiski and I were both simpletons! We aided Austria, only to see its ingratitude!'

Andréev, however, states (p. 384) that a desire to aid Austria against Hungary was not the only motive which urged Russia to subdue the Hungarian insurrection. There was another reason, and it was that in the revolutionary army there were twenty thousand Poles!

Be that as it may, however, the war of 1848 left traces in Russia, for then a decided plan was formed to emancipate the serfs. Nikolai Pavlovitch, in fact, affirmed that he would do all in his power to effect so important a movement. It is said that even in 1846 Count Kiselev had made a project regarding the emancipation, but it was deferred by the events of 1848.

It is remarkable that during that year the emancipation of the serfs was considered as a purely social aim, whereas, when it actually occurred in a later reign, the important act confirmed the union between the government and the people, and tended to confirm the power of the former.

'But at the very period when the Russians imagined their own country the

most powerful in the world, a blow from the west was aimed at Russia. The Crimean war broke out. It disclosed much hitherto unseen. It dissipated the mirage produced by a peace of thirty years; and, when the mirage vanished, the Colossus—at whose signal the magic shade had been summoned which terrified all Europe—was no longer among the living.’ (Andréev, p. 385.)

## CHAPTER LV

### THE EMPEROR NIKOLAI PAVLOVITCH AS A MAN

TALL of stature, stately, symmetrically formed, a countenance stamped with manly beauty, a naturally proud bearing, the person of the Emperor Nikolai Pavlovitch was such that, when once seen, it could never be forgotten.

‘What eyes! In all my life as a sailor I have not before seen such eyes!’ exclaimed a Swedish admiral when Nikolai Pavlovitch landed at Stockholm, and fixed his penetrating gaze on the admiral.

And that cold, scrutinising glance was capable of fascinating most natures and of rendering others confused. It was doubtless the peculiar personality of the young sovereign which produced so powerful an effect on the surrounding masses during the memorable day of December 14, 1825. On another occasion, agitation prevailed among the people in St. Petersburg in 1830. An enraged crowd blamed doctors for poisoning the water and for the appearance of cholera, rushed to hospitals, threw out beds, and next attempted to kill the doctors. The city authorities were on the point of summoning armed force, when suddenly, on an open space, Nikolai Pavlovitch himself appeared. He was excited. His glance seemed on fire. He stopped and stood upright in his conveyance, among the angry multitude. ‘Who are you?’ shouted the emperor. ‘Are you Poles or Frenchmen? The Poles put my beloved brother to death. Will you do the same to me? Fall on your knees!’

And the mass, swayed as if by the influence of a magic wand, knelt down.

In 1827, at the commencement of his reign, Nikolai Pavlovitch seemed somewhat pale and thin; but, subsequently, he became stouter, which much improved his symmetrical proportions. It was thought that the uniform of the Cossacks particularly suited him. But, indeed, Nikolai Pavlovitch always wore uniform, and only appeared in the dress of a civilian when abroad. At home, in Russia, Nikolai Pavlovitch wore a military overcoat instead of a dressing-gown. In fact, the tight, closely-fitting military costumes adopted by the emperor are said to have injured his health. One English doctor—



Grenville—indeed, from physical observations, correctly foretold the period of the emperor's death.

'St. Petersburg is a Russian capital, yet it is not Russia,' said Nikolai Pavlovitch, on one occasion, to the French ambassador, Custines. 'You must see Moscow and Nijni-Novgorod.'

Nikolai Pavlovitch himself liked to see Russia and to drive about at full speed from one spot to another. So fast did he drive, indeed, that once he was thrown out of his conveyance and had a broken collar-bone. Thus he was forced to halt, and to undergo treatment in the town of Tschembar (government of Penza).

Having had a military education in early life, the Emperor Nikolai Pavlovitch was ever afterwards very fond of all that concerned the military. While yet grand duke, and while he inhabited the Anitchkov palace, were to be seen hung up on the walls of some apartments drawings of all the different costumes of Russian armies. And, when emperor, Nikolai Pavlovitch had a dinner-service with the same designs. The emperor also liked paintings which represented battles. The celebrated French military painter, Horace Verney, once received as presents from the emperor a pair of beautiful horses, a Russian sledge, and a coachman sent on purpose to Paris.

Nikolai Pavlovitch liked to read Homer's *Iliad*, in Grietitch's translation. So absorbed was the emperor on one occasion with the said work, that he was too late for a court ball.

Nikolai Pavlovitch was also fond of the theatre, although it was less interesting at that epoch than representations given abroad, on account of the strict censorship. Notwithstanding, nothing was spared to attract the best actors to St. Petersburg—'that Greece and Italy, without marble and sun,' according to Custines; or, 'the most magnificent but the dullest of European capitals,' according to Wellington.

The domestic life of the Emperor Nicholas was remarkable for its extreme simplicity, copied probably from the example of his elder brother, Alexander I. Nikolai Pavlovitch slept on a simple mattress stuffed with hair. He often rose before dawn. A military overcoat, instead of a dressing-gown, showed his dislike to luxury. The emperor's dinner was simple. It consisted only of a few dishes, not unfrequently quite Russian. The emperor ate with appetite, and generally finished dinner very soon. He was remarkably sober. He did not like tobacco, and disliked that those near him should smoke. In the evening he drank two or three glasses of strong tea. Regarding the use of time he was very exact. Each hour had its own occupation.

In private life the Emperor Nicholas strove to be a true gentleman. He was,

besides, eager to know the opinions of foreigners, and what they wrote about him. He seemed to feel that, as sovereign of so vast an empire, the eyes of all were turned towards him. Hence the immense number of foreign works on Russia, and entitled 'Rossica,' collected in the public library of St. Petersburg.

As we have already noticed, the remarkable personal appearance of the Emperor Nicholas could not fail to make a profound impression on the masses. On seeing Nikolai Pavlovitch in Rome, in the full uniform of the Horse Guards, Traustiverinetz, in a transport of admiration, exclaimed: 'What a pity that thou art not our sovereign!'

Nikolai Pavlovitch was then riding on his way to visit the Pope.

But, on the other hand, the cold, stern, scrutinising gaze of the Emperor Nicholas was such that few had courage to tell him the truth.

'Those around your majesty seldom dare to be frank,' wrote Colonel Rostovtzev, when he disclosed to the emperor the details of a conspiracy on the first day after he ascended the throne. During a personal interview with Rostovtzev, the emperor embraced, kissed him, thanked him for his frankness, and urged him henceforth to live in the Winter Palace; but Rostovtzev, as we already mentioned, refused every reward. Andréev (p. 391) mentions another occasion when none dared to tell Nikolai Pavlovitch the true state of affairs. The incident even assumed a comical form. While in Kiev the emperor wished to visit a hospital. The patients, excited by the news, rose from their beds in order to see his majesty arrive. But the emperor was very prompt in his movements, and was already on the point of entering the ward, so that the patients had not time to go to their own beds. Great disorder then ensued, and each rushed to the bed nearest him. Meanwhile the emperor entered. He then saw with amazement that many patients had not at all the illness marked on a slate near the bed. The doctor of the hospital was accordingly changed, although he was in no wise to blame; because none had sufficient courage to say what in reality had occurred.

In Nikolai Pavlovitch there were, in fact, two men combined—one, an emperor; another, a private individual and father of a family. Nikolai Pavlovitch proudly looked into the eyes of Europe, but Russians he considered as devoted subjects and his own children. Brilliancy and magnificence must surround the throne of the Russian sovereign; and, at that epoch, the court of St. Petersburg was considered the first in Europe as regarded outward display.

Notwithstanding, that brilliant sphere was scarcely where Nikolai Pavlovitch felt most at home. During court receptions it was even remarked that he spoke but little to foreign ambassadors, and left that chiefly to his consort the empress.

'Ma chère, nos beaux jours sont passés!' exclaimed Nicholas to Alexandra Feodorovna, on leaving the Anitchkov palace with her, when about to commence his reign.

As for the intercourse of Nikolai Pavlovitch with those around him, there was a marked difference in his manner towards foreigners and towards Russians. The latter he ever regarded with paternal feelings.

'That is a family affair! Europe has no right to meddle with it!' exclaimed the Emperor Nicholas regarding the revolt of December 14, 1825. The reply was made to foreign ambassadors, who begged permission to accompany his majesty when about to subdue the insurgents. And the remark showed the sovereign's real character.

Catherine II. and Paul had both correspondents in Europe; and, during the reign of Alexander I., a French newspaper was published in St. Petersburg in order to inform Europe of what was passing in Russia. We have already noticed that the Emperor Nicholas liked to know the opinions of foreigners regarding himself. He, in fact, often received and conversed with those who visited Russia; and, not unfrequently, on such occasions he appeared in a most favourable light, and left a pleasant remembrance of himself. As for Russian authors of the epoch, they submitted to the emperor's influence. Nikolai Pavlovitch showed every attention and kindness to the dying historian Karamzine, and assigned him special apartments in the palace of Taurida, where there was a garden in which he could walk. The emperor, too, was liberal towards Karamzine's family. Jookovski, at this epoch, was inseparable from the imperial domestic circle.

Even the self-willed Pooshkine, whose biting satire had so often got him into disgrace, turned over a new leaf.

Andréev (p. 398) narrates the following details concerning the incorrigible poet:—

'It was necessary to correct Pooshkine otherwise than by punishment. Accordingly, a state messenger, one fine day, brought him from captivity to Moscow, at the time of the emperor's coronation there. In travelling costume, covered with dust, the poet was conducted directly to the palace of the Kremlin to the emperor's presence.

"Tell me frankly," said Nikolai Pavlovitch, addressing the poet, "wouldst thou have participated in the revolt of December 14 hadst thou then been in St. Petersburg?"

"Certainly, please your majesty!" was the reply. "All my friends had joined the conspiracy. I could not have done otherwise than go with them, and, thank God, my absence saved me from ruin!"



“Come, now, Pooshkine, thou hast played enough of tricks during thy time,” continued the emperor; “thou must be serious now! Henceforth, I myself shall be thine only censor. Send directly to me all that thou writest.”

And Pooshkine did become serious. His restive muse was subdued. He was subsequently a gentleman-in-waiting at court. He was the husband of a court beauty, and became a man of the world. He no longer indulged in biting satire, but wrote his famous tragedy of *Boris Godonov*.

Impartiality obliges us also to state that generous proposals were likewise made to the widow of Reeteev, one of the December conspirators executed. If law had punished him as a criminal, history is more disposed to unveil the past; and there can be no doubt that Reeteev’s moderation had prevented his associates from bloodshed—it may even be, from shedding the sovereign’s blood. Such was the merit of one who had been a member of the northern society. Thus government proposed a pension to Reeteev’s widow, which she, however, declined. History, in this wise, cannot fail to see that tribute was paid to the memory of the deceased. (Andréev, pp. 398-399.)

The following anecdote also leaves a good remembrance of Emperor Nikolai Pavlovitch :—

On one occasion, while driving alone in the streets of St. Petersburg, the emperor met a very poor funeral, attended only by a few mourners. Nikolai Pavlovitch—with the touching respect which Russians always show towards the dead—at once took off his hat, and then ordered the coachman to follow the simple funeral procession. On seeing that the emperor joined it, it soon became an immense crowd. Whereupon Nikolai Pavlovitch, addressing those near him, said, ‘Now, friends, take my place,’ and retired.

After making investigations, it turned out that the deceased had been a poor but honest official, unable to make any provision for his family. So Nikolai Pavlovitch, as he considered Russians his own children, placed the dead man’s sons at school, and granted a pension to his widow.

## CHAPTER LVI

### FAMILY OF THE EMPEROR NIKOLAI PAVLOVITCH

CONSORT—Princess Charlotte, daughter of King Frederick William II. of Prussia and Louisa of Mecklenburg-Strelitz; known in Russia as Alexandra Feodorovna.

SONS

Alexander II., Constantine, Nicholas, Michael.

DAUGHTERS

Mary, subsequently duchess of Leichtenberg; Olga, queen of Würtemberg; Alexandra, married Prince Frederick of Hesse-Cassel, and died soon afterwards, at the birth of her first child.

CHAPTER LVII

REIGN OF THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER II. (NIKOLAEVITCH), 'THE MARTYR  
SOVEREIGN,' 'THE LIBERATOR,' 1855-1881

GREAT was the joy in Moscow on April 17 (29, N.S.), 1818, when the Grand Duchess Alexandra Feodorovna gave birth to her first son, subsequently the Emperor Alexander II.

His uncle, Alexander I., then occupied the throne. He was at that time in the south of Russia; but, on hearing the glad news, he hastened to Moscow. On May 5, the baptism of the infant prince took place in the Tschoodov monastery (at the Kreml), and prayers of thanksgiving were offered up for the birth of an heir.

After the death of Alexander I. in Taganrog (19th November 1825), when his younger brother, Nikolai Pavlovitch, became sovereign, his eldest son, Alexander Nikolaevitch, was proclaimed heir-apparent to the throne of Russia. Two individuals immediately near his person, and who had much influence on his mind, were General Charles Merder and the celebrated Russian poet, Vasili Andréevitch Jookovski.

'These two excellent men,' says Safonov, in his *Historical Sketch of the Life and Reign of Alexander II.* (pp. 7-8), 'strove to instil into their illustrious pupil's mind, that not merely the outward distinctions of royalty place a sovereign at an unattainable height, from which he may be considered as the father of his people; but that a monarch is only indeed great when he possesses qualities necessary for his exalted position; that in order to govern millions, he must have a mind able to feel and to understand the wants of his people; that the man chosen by God to occupy the important position of a sovereign is, notwithstanding, himself only a man, who must at last render an account of his actions to God; finally, that the sway of a monarch is powerful and indestructible when it relies on the love of the people.'

From General Merder's *Notes*, we learn that the youthful companions who shared the amusements and the education of Alexander Nikolaevitch were Vielgorski and Patkul.

We learn many interesting details from General Merder's *Notes*.

In 1829, when the Emperor Nicholas, with his family, went to Warsaw and thence abroad, General Merder remarks:—

'*March* 19.—When the Grand Duke Alexander learned from the empress that he would accompany her to Warsaw, he repeated to me what he had heard, and then asked: "Where will so many horses be obtained? It will be a great misfortune for the poor peasants," continued he, "to take away their horses at the very time when they are most needed."

'I replied, that sympathy and consideration for that useful class were highly commendable and did him honour.'

General Merder furthermore remarks that the grand duke, when he did undertake the said journey, paid the utmost attention to its most minute details, and expressed pity on witnessing the extreme poverty of many peasants' huts.

'It was peculiarly agreeable to me,' writes General Merder, 'to see the readiness with which the young prince drew out his purse in order to offer its contents to a poor widow and her three little children.'

From subsequent remarks concerning the education of General Merder's young pupils, he tells us that from the number of weeks during which the grand duke and Vielgorski received marks of distinction they obtained full praise. Then they had permission to put aside a certain sum for benevolent purposes. At the end of the year calculation was made which pupil had collected more, and, consequently, who had more means for benevolence.

As the journal proceeds, Merder, however, adds: 'But now it is time to put away childish things. It is time to think of strictly performing duty; of obtaining esteem; of aiming at personal merit, which cannot be without strong will, without constant self-restraint.'

In a work entitled *The Churchman's Companion* (vol. vi., July to December, pp. 144-152), there is a most interesting 'Biographical Sketch of the late Emperor Alexander II. of Russia,' by W. H. Allen, who remarks:—

'As a child, this unfortunate prince was over-educated and over-drilled, till he narrowly escaped softening of the brain when seventeen. At the age of seven, when he had no longer a youthful amusement, Marshal Marmont wrote with astonishment of the skill with which he manœuvred the soldiers under his command, during a review, in the midst of twenty-two thousand men.'



'At eight the following rule of life was laid down for the young grand duke, and faithfully carried out:—He rose at six o'clock A.M., dressed, attended to his devotions, breakfasted, and prepared his lessons, which lasted from seven to nine, from ten to twelve, and from five to seven. The first pause was filled up by visits to his parents and the parade-ground, the second by a walk and dinner at two o'clock. As the breakfast consisted—after the usual Russian fashion—of a simple cup of tea and a dry roll, he ought to have dined with appetite. His lessons ended at seven. Then the boy had gymnastic exercises, followed by supper, after which he had to write a journal and to give his tutor a recapitulation of the day's work. At ten he invariably retired to rest; and history was read to him till he fell asleep. His holidays were not to extend over six weeks in the year; and they were to be occupied exclusively with military exercises, in company with the cadet corps.

'The subjects of which the child's lessons consisted seemed singularly unfitted to aid an autocrat in his duties. Besides, of course, arithmetic, there were the elements of geometry, philosophy, grammar, logical theories, physical geography, mineralogy, botany, zoology, anthropology, statistics, morals, metaphysics, natural and revealed religion—all these were instilled into him between eight and twelve years of age. Political rudiments, political geography, history and the laws of other nations, which were added, may have been more useful. Notwithstanding, after the boy had passed a brilliant *viva voce* examination on these subjects, in presence of the Russian court and some invited guests (April 1835), the Emperor Nicholas observed that "a strong fist was much more necessary to govern Russia than all that learning."

When the prince had sufficiently digested these subjects, he was to learn French, German, Polish, English, drawing, and music.

Such were the early childhood and youth of Alexander Nikolaevitch.

At a later period—May 2, 1837—the young grand duke quitted St. Petersburg in order to undertake a journey to various governments (provinces of the Russian empire). Subsequently he was the first of the imperial family who visited distant Siberia.

Its inhabitants received him with rapture. 'Formerly our country was Siberia, now it has become Russia!' exclaimed they.

While admiring the picturesque scenes of these remote regions, the grand duke was also struck by the abundance and wealth of natural productions; but he also saw that they were nearly unworked in consequence of the poverty of the thin population. The sad position of exiles in Siberia also struck the compassionate mind of the young prince. So much was this the

case, that he implored the emperor to mitigate their sufferings; and the request was granted.

On returning from Siberia the grand duke took another direction, and visited the central governments of Russia.

The journey of the heir-apparent lasted about eight months, and it was like a 'student's apartment, in which the future emperor saw the distinctive features and wants of his native country,' to quote an idea expressed by the metropolitan Philaret in an address to the grand duke.

From 1838 till 1839 the grand duke visited various European countries. He passed some time in Sweden, as he was desirous to become acquainted with the manners and customs of his neighbours. Then he visited Denmark, Prussia, Austria, Italy, Holland, and England. Everywhere he was especially interested in the condition of the working-classes. Not unfrequently, too, he used to go into the cottages of peasants and to converse with them.

In 1840 the grand duke again went abroad; but curiosity to see foreign countries was not the only motive which prompted him to travel a second time. His chief object was to choose a bride in the person of the Princess Mary, then sixteen years of age, and daughter of the duke of Hesse-Darmstadt. The princess came to Russia, and on April 16, 1841, amid the universal joy of the people, was united in marriage to the Hereditary Grand Duke Alexander Nikolaevitch. She was henceforth known in Russia by the names of Maria Alexandrovna.

Meanwhile, political events, to which we have already alluded, led to the Crimean war, in which the Hereditary Grand Duke Alexander took a personal part. Then came the death of his father, the Emperor Nicholas, who was succeeded by his eldest son, Alexander II.

When peace was proclaimed in Paris (March 18, 1856), the new sovereign devoted himself exclusively to promote the good of his own subjects.

'It would be too long to enumerate all the reforms with which Alexander II. has endowed his country,' wrote a Swiss resident in St. Petersburg, in April 1881, to the *Bibliothèque Universelle*, a magazine published at Lausanne. 'It is enough to say that, apart from those well known, such as the emancipation of the serfs, judicial reform, the introduction of provincial self-government, the press laws, conscription made obligatory to all, there is not a single department of public life which has not received some amelioration or some benefit due to his initiative. Literature and art have always enjoyed his special protection. His tender heart could see no suffering without being moved by it, and the army will always remember the frequent visits he paid to it during the last war, and

the consoling words he was particularly skilled in addressing to every wounded man. His death itself was caused by the good feeling which prevented him from leaving a fatal spot without assisting the men who had fallen in his service, and this last act of his life has greatly enhanced his popularity.'

'For such a eulogium on an autocrat to proceed from the pen of a republican,' continues Allen, 'argues that the subject of it must have possessed some merit; and even with the levelling tendencies of the present day, the ruler of one hundred millions of human beings and the sovereign of the seventh part of the globe can, under no circumstances, be an object of indifference to the world at large.'

'But it cannot be passed over that Alexander II. possessed a certain weakness of character which led him into error too commonly the snare of kings, though his faults have been greatly exaggerated.'

Who, indeed, is perfect? And before condemning any one, should we not ask ourselves the impartial question, 'How would we also have acted in similar circumstances, and had we been exposed to the same temptations?'

Be that as it may, however, let us once more allude to startling statements made by Allen in his 'Biographical Sketch of the Emperor Alexander of Russia':—

'Before the new code of laws promulgated in 1865, there were neither witnesses, jury, nor barristers employed before a judge, who generally managed the case by a private arrangement with the richer of the two parties concerned. A young nobleman, in the first year during which Alexander II. occupied the throne, set a pack of hounds to tear in pieces a serf-boy, an only son, who had been negligent in the care of a favourite dog, and the nobleman was stabbed to the heart by the boy's indignant father. A soldier who casually met an officer had to halt, uncover, and stand cap in hand till his superior had passed. There was said to be only one official in the government of Moscow who would refuse a bribe, and a Russian could not travel without paying a tax of £40, to be renewed every year he was absent. In some cases letters were actually bought from the postman, who, if he delivered them at all, expected a fee. Only three hundred students could enter universities during the reign of the Emperor Nicholas, that sovereign being of opinion that the said number would supply as many officials as were needed for the public service; and miles of land, now cultivated by freed serfs on the Volga, were then a virgin forest and rank grass.'

Yet Mr. Pobodonostzov, who was tutor to the Emperor Alexander III., declares that the restless, feverish state of the country now is due to the reign of Alexander II. having been twenty-six years of uninterrupted reform, and that



it only requires a period of cessation from all reform, which would give it rest. And there are Englishmen long resident in Russia who ask, 'Do the Russians show themselves so just and true in all their dealings, either with the state or with inferiors, as to assure us that a Russian parliament would pay the interest on the foreign debt as faithfully as it has hitherto been paid by an autocrat? Would the upper classes take upon their own shoulders their fair proportion of taxes? or, would not the peasants be more likely to be deprived of some privileges which they obtained from Alexander II.? Would the punctuality on railways now enforced by the crown be regarded by a people to whom the value of time or of accuracy in speech is quite unknown? And would not the credit and consequent external strength of the empire be lowered by internal discord, broken engagements, and imprudent foreign wars? In short, have the Nihilists given any more proof than the Taeping rebels in China that they are fit to take part in the government of the empire whose administration they are so anxious to upset?'

Certain it is that measures practicable and beneficial in England would be utterly impossible in Russia, where the people have been accustomed not only to absolute government, but even to harsh treatment, and where mildness only appears as another form of weakness.

'One great difficulty in the way of reform in Russia is,' continues Allen, 'that while one party is ready to adopt measures fit to undermine society, another side thinks that the government has already advanced much too far in liberalism, and would willingly induce it to retrace its steps.

'There was no subject on which the Emperor Alexander II. was more opposed than in promoting education among the working-classes—as he publicly said, 'to enable them to resist the speculation and oppression of their superiors.' And he opened universities to women students against the advice of all his ministers, and permitted women to qualify as physicians, from the want of medical advice in the provinces. That this sudden extension of education among a hitherto exceedingly ignorant people should have no drawbacks is hardly to be expected.'

It is ever so in similar circumstances. Proud of superior attainments, many of the young generation consider their parents as ignorant, set their authority at defiance, and too early become independent.

Towards 1863, heavy clouds overhung the political atmosphere. The Polish insurrection, instigated by the emperors of France and Austria for the sake of weakening Prussia's ally, and carried on by the Austrians and emigrant Poles, gave the greatest uneasiness to the Russian court; and when it was followed by the Austrian and Prussian war, the Russian empress's entire sympathy was with

her Austrian relative, whom she had advised her brother, the duke of Darmstadt, to assist with his army, while her consort inclined to his old uncle in Prussia. In 1870 the same difference of opinion existed on the subject of the Franco-German war.

‘Anarchy, ruin, and bloodshed are all that revolutionists, during twenty-six years, have been able to bestow on Russia,’ says Allen. ‘The Crimean war seems to have given birth to Nihilism, which was practically unknown in the reign of Nicholas I. The destruction which its votaries are said to have caused in Russia by frightful conflagrations, between 1859 and 1864, far surpassed the famous conflagration of Moscow in 1812. Cathedrals, ancient archives, noble palaces, whole streets, containing the homes of the rich and poor, the entire town of Simbirsk, powder magazines, a third part of St. Petersburg, had all been consumed since 1860 by the hands of political barbarians. The Russian conspirators were encouraged by German Socialists, who doubtless had a double motive in urging these destructive measures in Russia. But that their advice should have been followed to this extent, argues an extraordinary degree of fanaticism and shortsightedness on the part of Russian revolutionists. Too late, they now perceive that all their evil deeds have failed to produce the desired effect, but have rather tended to promote loyalty in Russia.’

One important reform of Alexander II. was the abolition of corporal punishment.

The long intercourse held between Russians and Tartars had greatly deteriorated the manners and customs of the former. Thus they had adopted from their Oriental conquerors many barbarous, cruel punishments of criminals, such, for example, as merciless flogging with the knout, blows from a cudgel, pouring molten metal down the throat, burning over a slow fire, etc. When Russia was freed from the Tartar yoke, such hideous cruelty was gradually softened, especially by the influence of Christianity and civilisation. Notwithstanding, remnants of Middle Age barbarism still remained in the present century. We allude to splitting the nostrils, branding the face and other parts of the body, the knout, the whip, the cat, running the gauntlet, and ‘other treasures of Tartar civilisation,’ as Safonov calls them (p. 88).

When Alexander I. occupied the throne, noblemen, guild merchants, priests, and diakons (lower clergy) were exempt from corporal punishment. Then splitting the nostrils and the Tartar knout were abolished. During the reign of Nicholas I., blows of the whip were considerably lessened. But when the humane Alexander II. became emperor, by two manifestoes (1855-56) he decreed that criminals should be exempt from corporal punishment. This was to be effected

not only in Russia, but especially in Poland, where various tortures were inflicted by way of admonition, even during interrogation of those accused.

In March 1861, by special desire of the Grand Duke Nikolai Alexandrovitch, a project was formed for the abolition of corporal punishment.

On April 17 (the emperor's birthday), 1863, Alexander II. abolished the punishments of the knout, the whip, the cat, running the gauntlet, and branding the body. Rods were only to be used when any other punishment seemed impossible.

Let us, however, remark in passing that even now, in remote parts of the empire, ugly stories come to light concerning officials who abuse their power. Thus it not unfrequently happens that unfortunate criminals die from overflogging.

In 1875 the Christians of Bosnia and Herzegovina took up arms against Turkish oppression. They were also joined by the Servians and Montenegrins. Russian volunteers took an active part in the struggle. But the Servians were finally beaten at Dioniish. Russia thereupon declared war on Turkey in 1877. The Turks were finally overcome, and the war terminated by the peace of San Stephano, 19th February 1878—the memorable anniversary of the emancipation of the serfs.

But other European powers considered the conditions of the peace of San Stephano too advantageous for Russia. England particularly, in person of Lord Beaconsfield, minister of foreign affairs, opposed these conditions. The policy of England was, moreover, upheld by Austria, France, and even Prussia. Thus new conferences ensued in Berlin, where, only on January 9, 1879, peace was finally concluded between Russia and Turkey. Such was the result of this famous war, which amazed all Europe by the bravery and power of endurance shown by the Russian soldiers. The famous Field-marshal Moltke, who knew Turkey well during the war of 1828-29, followed every step of the army in 1877-78. On a map he made special marks to indicate the movements of the Turkish and Russian troops. When Plevna fell, November 28, Moltke ordered the map to be removed, as neither side could go further. On learning the serious intention of the Russians to cross the Balkan mountains during winter, he at first would not believe it, and, as a friend, advised them to abandon an enterprise impossible to accomplish.

Notwithstanding, the Russians did accomplish what seemed impossible.

‘If the memories of the treaties of Paris and Berlin have somewhat dimmed the glory of Alexander II.’s reign, there is, however, no doubt at all that he is not the less regarded with gratitude and regret by the great mass of the Russian



people. But a sovereign who has endured a defeat has lost his attraction, for the time at least, in the eyes of the higher class in Russia; and although Alexander II. accomplished his aim in restoring his empire to the position it enjoyed in his father's reign, there is no doubt that the two treaties in which, to avoid another sanguinary war, he yielded to the demands of united Europe, were the real causes of the conspiracy which ended so fatally, and that if the treaty of San Stephano had been carried out, he would have been left to die a natural death,' says Allen.

To quote a second time from the letter of a Swiss resident in St. Petersburg, mentioned above, we see the following comment on the recent murder of Alexander II. :—

'A glance at Russia now is enough to disprove all that the revolutionists have told us of the people's impatience to throw off the yoke of a tyrant; for the passionate attachment of the nation to its sovereign has never been greater than at this moment. No one recollects such universal sorrow in St. Petersburg and the provinces. Loud sobs are heard in all the churches, where masses are being served incessantly. The newspapers are filled with accounts of apoplectic strokes, of mental alienation, and of suicide, produced by the terrible event, and they are the universal subjects of conversation. All agree on the necessity of taking energetic measures to prevent such frightful crimes.'

To revert again to Allen's 'Biographical Sketch of the Emperor Alexander II.,' we find the following remarks :—

'In the case of Alexander II., much of the useless study which was forced into his juvenile brain might have been exchanged for the physical vigour of which it deprived him. Throughout his life he was tormented by asthma, and latterly by a partial paralysis of the throat, supposed to proceed from cerebral congestion, which interfered with his speech, and for which he sought occasional relief at Ems. When he was but twelve years old, he was wounded in the ankle by an assassin, and had a stiff joint for the rest of his life. But the numerous plots of which he was the object had a more innocent victim in the amiable and suffering empress, and her much-enduring life was closed in a gloom which she had done little to deserve. If, in her younger days, she had been supposed to be ambitious and too anxious for personal influence over her husband's empire, for years past she had only been known to Russia by her charity and acts of devotion. Deterred from visiting the Crimea, after the poisoning of two sentinels on guard at the palace of Livadia, she went to Cannes in 1880, as it was hoped, when absent, she might lose the dread, which had haunted her for a long period, of a revolution in Russia.

“Those who approached her,” wrote the friend and mouthpiece of Prince Bismarck, “describe a fearful picture of the anguish with which this princess, whose complaint was incurable and only a question of time, followed the progress of political events. She was uneasy, above everything, as to the future of her eldest son, whom she pictured to herself surrounded by perils of all sorts, and whom she constantly advised to follow out the national desires. After the attempt to blow up the emperor’s train outside Moscow, she was seized with a passionate desire to see her husband and children again, till the doctors yielded to her prayers, and allowed her in mid-winter to return to the shores of the Neva. A few days after she had reached the Winter Palace, the explosion under the dining-room took place (5th February 1880). This had an almost fatal effect upon her, and she existed only by the aid of an artificial atmosphere till the following June 3, when mercifully relieved by death.”

‘On the last morning of his life the Emperor Alexander II. signed a decree for the assembly of a species of states-general, which was to be published in newspapers on the following day. The decree was suspended in consequence of his murder, and the advisers of Alexander III. undoubtedly pointed out to the new monarch that the present disorders were due to his father’s liberal measures, and that a strong despotism alone could keep the empire together. But, unfortunately, it was not a strong despotism, and revolutionists took advantage of the confusion of affairs to incite the peasantry against the Jews in Poland and southern Russia, under pretext of avenging the assassination of the sovereign who had protected and improved the position of his Hebrew subjects, till he was styled “the Jew emperor” by the more bigoted among the Poles. At first, the Nihilist chief, Prince Krapotkine, wrote in favour of this movement; but when he and his like-minded friends saw the bad effect it was making in western Europe, they changed their tactics, and pretended that the peasants were urged on by the Russian government. Unfortunately for the revolutionists, the reports of the British consul and of the Jewish rabbi at Odessa prove too clearly that forged documents, purporting to be orders from the emperor, were largely distributed in the towns and villages near railways, all of them urging these attacks, and that revolutionists then tried to make capital of them by pointing out to the middle classes the weakness of the government in not being able to protect life and property, far less to extend its dominions in accordance with the national ambition.

‘One of the most pleasing traits in the character of Alexander II. was his attachment to his suffering mother, by whose bedside he kept watch for the last four nights of her life. To spare her feelings, he would never allow himself to



be addressed in the regal style in her presence after his father's death, and she gratefully acknowledged this affection in a codicil to her will, added a few months before her own decease. It was thus that the dying empress expressed herself:—

“It was due to the pious care that my children showed me in my saddest hours, after the death of my much-loved husband, that I did not sink under such an unexpected calamity. Their love has preserved my life, especially the ever-watchful care and tenderness of my beloved son, the Emperor Alexander. Sustained by such warm, filial love, I have been able to withstand the most terrible strokes of fate. From the depths of my heart I thank you, my dear son Alexander, my fondly loved daughter-in-law Marie, and all my equally beloved children. May Heaven requite you for it, and your posterity also. You will read these lines when I am no more; but within me there live the faith and the conviction that the bonds which have united us and made us cling together here will not be finally rent asunder by death, and that the blessing of your father and my own will follow and shield you through your whole lives.”

‘The poor empress-mother was decidedly no prophetess, but, at all events, while she lived she had been an object of mutual interest to her family, which seemed to have been sometimes needed after she passed away.

‘Alexander II. and his consort now lie buried in the fortress-church of St. Petersburg, not in the chancel, with their predecessors, but lower down in the nave, among those princes and princesses who never reigned. Alexander Nikolaevitch and Maria Alexandrovna had long selected this spot for themselves, for the sake of being near the daughter (Alexandra) and the son (Nicholas) who had died before them. The four tombs, covered with flowers, are enclosed in one railing—the sovereigns in front, the small sarcophagus of the little Grand Duchess Alexandra behind her father's, and that of the Hereditary Grand Duke Nicholas behind his mother's. There was room for only one more tomb among the emperors and empresses who are buried in the chancel, and it was reported in St. Petersburg that the Nihilists hoped Alexander II. would be placed there; and they would have tried to make the people believe that Providence never intended another emperor to reign, as there was no space left for him.

‘Some very touching memorials are placed on the imperial tomb—among others, a wreath from the peasants of Bulgaria, “To the memory of their Liberator,” and a wreath from the distant town of Irkutsk in Siberia.’



## CHAPTER LVIII

## THE LAST MOMENTS OF ALEXANDER II.

IN Safonov's *Historical Sketch of the Life and Reign of Alexander II.* (p. 134), we find the following remarks :—

‘During the twenty-six years of Alexander II.’s reign, so many great and humane acts were accomplished by that never-to-be-forgotten sovereign-liberator, that a description of them will furnish inexhaustible subjects for future historians of Russia.

‘Notwithstanding, we are compelled to transcribe in the pages of contemporary annals the mournful fact that secret societies of monsters existed, who could in no wise pardon the emperor’s reforms.

‘On April 4, 1866, a secret revolutionary society named “Hell” produced a fiendish adherent in the person of Karakozov; but God, by the hand of a simple Russian peasant, Komisarov, averted a blow aimed at the sovereign. On May 25, 1867, a Polish emigrant, Berezovski, disgraced his nation by an attempt made on the emperor’s life during a visit he paid to Paris; and the French police had no small trouble to rescue Berezovski alive from the hands of the enraged French people, desirous personally to deal with an individual who thus transgressed the sacred rights of hospitality.

‘On April 2, 1879, a new attempt on the life of the Russian sovereign was made by Soloviev; but God again spared the emperor. In 1880, Russia was on the point of celebrating the anniversary of one who, during twenty-five years, had devoted his whole life to promote the good of suffering humanity. For on March 7, 1879, Alexander II. had ordered the abolition of personal imprisonment for debt. In January 1880, commands were given to open new judicial institutions in Kiev, Volhynia, and Podolsk. All knew that on such occasions some beneficial measures for the people would ensue. But, as if to deride the popular feeling, the seditious once more committed a diabolical deed. On February 5, 1880, in the evening, an explosion took place under the dining-room of the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg. On that occasion ten sentinels on duty were killed and forty-four of the Finnish bodyguards were wounded, but none of the imperial family suffered. At length the 19th of February came. Russia peacefully celebrated the auspicious event. The emperor then ordered half the arrears of the people to be remitted. In a word, had tares not sprung up to choke the good seed, all seemed even yet to promise a prolonged, glorious reign.

On Sunday, March 1 (13, N.S.), Alexander II. was at a parade of the troops in the riding-school of the Engineer Corps. When the parade concluded, the emperor went to lunch with his cousin, the Grand Duchess Ekaterina Michaelovna, in her palace. After leaving the grand duchess, and while on his way homewards, dynamite was thrown under his carriage. It was consequently half shattered, and some persons near were wounded, although the emperor himself escaped unhurt; and although it was still possible to drive on in the carriage, and the coachman urged his majesty to do so, on seeing the wounded lying around, the emperor alighted from the carriage and went to see aid given to the sufferers. At that moment a criminal was seized. He turned out to be an individual named Rusakov. He was armed with a dagger and a loaded gun. On hearing the question among the crowd, 'What has happened to the emperor?' his majesty made the sign of the cross and replied, 'Thank God, I am safe.' 'But look,' continued the emperor, pointing to the wounded. 'And is God still to be thanked?' said the criminal. At that instant a second explosive missile was thrown. A frightful crash ensued. A mass of snow was scattered all around, mixed with shreds of cloth, while thick white smoke obscured the light. A cry of horror escaped from the crowd. The emperor fell. Some officers and sailors approached and raised him. He was in a deplorable condition. Both his legs were shattered under the knee; the flesh hung about in pieces, and his face was covered with blood. At that moment the emperor's brother, the Grand Duke Michael, approached. It was then purposed to carry his majesty to the nearest house, there to render the most urgent services. But on hearing the proposal, the emperor said, 'Take me to the palace; I wish to die there.' Then the emperor was wrapped up in an officer's mantle, belonging to some one near, and finally conveyed to the Winter Palace.

On the spot where the crime took place, no fewer than eighteen persons were killed and wounded. The second criminal also fell a victim to his evil deed. Fatally wounded and frightfully disfigured, he was transported to a hospital, where, without mentioning his name, he died unrepentant the same evening. The emperor was meanwhile taken to the palace. After the first bandaging made by the court doctors, the emperor felt somewhat better. The imperial confessor, the archpresbyter Bajanov, at once profited by the temporary amelioration, and administered the holy communion to the sufferer. At twenty-five minutes to four the same afternoon, the emperor expired.

When the sad news became generally known in St. Petersburg, grief, humiliation, shame, seized the whole capital. Warerooms, coffee-houses, and all other public resorts were immediately closed. The event had newly occurred, but it seemed

March 1 (13, N.S.), 1881—  
Death of  
Alexander II.

improbable, impossible, that a crime so frightful, so unprecedented, had actually taken place. A sovereign who had emancipated his people from bondage, from the whip, from running the gauntlet, from branding! A sovereign who had ameliorated every department of public administration, who had shared the privations of soldiers during war, who had loaded his subjects with benefits! Could it be that he had thus fallen a victim to the designs of monsters? And in whose name was the crime committed? What did those who had killed the father of his people desire? They desired to act according to their own teaching; and it was to inculcate murder, explosions, underground excavations. They acknowledged neither God, nor religion, nor family ties, nor individual property. For example, if one man amasses capital to maintain himself and his household, his wealth is not his own, but he must share it with drones and parasites. His wife also is not his own, but belongs to the community. There is no marriage, and if children are born they should not be brought up by their parents, but by society. Such teaching, however, is against even the laws of nature, for animals live in pairs and bring up their own young. Such teaching can find no footing amongst honest men. Evil deeds, notwithstanding, at that period agitated all Russia and all Europe.

Each foreign court hastened to testify the deepest sympathy to the new emperor and profound respect for the memory of the 'sovereign-liberator.'

The people, overwhelmed with grief, hastened to the house of God, and there before the altar found consolation in prayer.

On the spot where Alexander II. fell, a church has been built, dedicated to the Resurrection of Christ the Saviour.

'Our very proximity to the epoch prevents us from fully appreciating all that Alexander II. did for Russia,' continues Safonov in the preface to his work. 'On reading notes presented to the authorities of St. Petersburg concerning the proposal to build a church on the spot where the emperor fell by the hand of his enemies, because they could not pardon all the reforms he had introduced, we remarked in the prospectus the following heartfelt words:—

“ *March 10, 1881.*

“ When years pass away, when contending passions are at rest, when the dread and weariness of the present time are forgotten, in our places a new generation will appear; but the memory of a sovereign who liberated millions from bondage will never die in the hearts of the people. Surrounded by a halo of glorious deeds, and crowned by a martyr's death, his majestic, suffering, mild image will stand high in history, and crowds will hasten to pray at the spot



stained by his blood as long as Russia lives and while the Russian signs himself with the cross—that symbol of immense, divine suffering and love.”

‘Events are so numerous, and individuals who devoted their mind, energy, and labour to accomplish the great reforms of the “sovereign-liberator” are in part still alive, while some are already in the tomb; but they have left records which explain the circumstances of that reign.

‘When ages have rolled away, and perhaps in presence of new military victories, the exploits of Russians at the Caucasus, at Sevastopol, in Poland, in Asia, at the Danube, will be effaced from the memory of succeeding generations. But that peaceful conquest which liberated twenty-two millions of bondmen, and raised them to the position of citizens, will never be forgotten in future ages.’ (See Preface to Safonov’s *Historical Sketch of the Life and Reign of Alexander II.*)

## CHAPTER LIX

### EXTRACTS FROM CONTEMPORARY RUSSIAN NEWSPAPERS

ALL connected with the death of Alexander II. has a mournful interest peculiar to itself. We accordingly subjoin extracts translated from contemporary Russian newspapers, which appeared on March 10 (22, N.S.), 1881. See *The Russian Courier* of the same date.

‘After lunching with her imperial highness the Grand Duchess Ekaterina Michaelovna of Mecklenburg-Strelitz,<sup>1</sup> the emperor drove from her palace, alone, in a close carriage and accompanied by a Cossack. The police-master Dvorjitzki drove behind in a sledge. On turning towards a street named the Moika, a bomb was thrown under the imperial carriage, which was partially shattered behind.

‘The emperor gave immediate orders to stop. The coachman, however, turned round and said, “Sit still, please your majesty, and I shall drive you on.” The emperor, notwithstanding, a second time called out “Stop!” and accordingly the carriage halted. The emperor thereupon alighted. An officer of the guards then hastened towards him. “Nothing has happened; I am safe and sound!” exclaimed his majesty. “But look!” continued he, pointing towards a severely wounded individual—Capri—a pianist, well known to the St. Petersburg public. The officer immediately raised the wounded man and helped to drive him home.

<sup>1</sup> The emperor’s first cousin by the father’s side. Ekaterina Michaelovna was daughter of the Grand Duke Michael Pavlovitch, brother of the Emperor Nicholas I.

At that time the emperor approached a criminal who had newly been seized, and who, of course, was an object of general attention. Thereupon a second bomb was thrown under the very legs of the emperor. In this wise they were both shattered below the knee, while splinters wounded the stomach and face. The police-master Dvorjitzki was also wounded. He, however, helped to raise the emperor, along with the aid of some sentinels and sailors, who approached on hearing the explosion. One and all, they succeeded in placing the emperor in Dvorjitzki's sledge. By this time his majesty was nearly unconscious. Several Cossacks and other persons on the spot were also killed, and many were wounded.'

Quoted from an announcement of the minister of the interior, Count Loris Melikov.

Colonel Dvorjitzki (the police-master), also an eye-witness of the crime, thus narrates what he saw:—

'On driving alongside of the fence at the Michaelovski Garden, by the Ekaterinski Canal, and ere reaching the Theatre Plain, I suddenly heard a stunning blow, and saw white smoke, which for some minutes obscured all the spot. The crash and fall of a mass of window-panes then ensued. The horses of the emperor's carriage and my own then stopped. I leapt out of the sledge; and on seeing that the emperor's carriage was injured, and that the emperor was opening the door, I hastened forwards to help him. He alighted and signed himself with the cross. His majesty's first question was: "Is the criminal seized?" I looked around, and on seeing that the crowd had caught some one, I replied, "Yes, he is seized, please your majesty." I afterwards added: "Sire, be pleased to go into my sledge and to drive off immediately to the palace." "Very well," said the emperor; "but first, show me the criminal"; and his majesty went towards a young man, who was seized by the hands, and asked his family name. I did not hear what it was; but I only urged the emperor to drive off. His majesty again said: "Very well; but first, show me the spot where the explosion took place." His majesty then went to the cavity which had been made by the bomb. There was a smile on his face. He evidently was under the influence of gratitude to divine Providence. But at that very moment something singular occurred. Another bomb, more powerful than the first, was thrown. I myself, struck in the back, fell forwards on my hands. But at the moment of my fall, I heard a groaning voice which exclaimed, "Help!" I jumped on my feet and saw the emperor lying on the ground, in a half-sitting posture. He was leaning on his hand. He was breathing heavily, and apparently was trying to

raise himself. I summoned up all my strength and tried to help the emperor. Then my eyes met a horrible scene, which made my very blood freeze. The emperor's legs were both shattered below the knee. There were no remains of boots or under-linen. There was only a bloody mass of flesh, skin, and bone. Blood was flowing like a stream. I shouted for help. Many from the surrounding crowd approached, most of whom were wounded. At that moment the emperor's brother, the Grand Duke Michael, drove forward. The emperor was thereupon placed in my sledge and transported to the Winter Palace. When his majesty was removed from the sledge, it was actually swamped by the quantity of blood from the wounds. At last, when the emperor was removed, I became unconscious.'

The following narration is also that of another eye-witness, an under-officer of the 8th Fleet Crew, printed in a newspaper entitled *The St. Petersburg Leaf*. Although apparently it is contradictory to the testimony of some other witnesses, yet we think it necessary to quote it. Concerning the emperor's last moments, each word is important, and should be retained for history. The narration is as follows:—

'We—i.e. some sailors and myself—hastened to the spot where the explosion had taken place. The emperor had then only alighted from the carriage, more than a third of which had been shattered by the explosion. We went forward. The emperor was then going towards the fence of the quay. Suddenly, a new explosion took place, and the emperor fell. We hurried to him and placed him in a sledge. To whom it belonged, I do not know. When we had placed his majesty in it, he raised his head, turned towards me and said: "Sailor lad, give thy handkerchief and put it on my head." Blood was flowing like a stream. "Please your majesty," said I, "my handkerchief is very dirty, so I cannot offer it to you." "That is nothing, sailor lad. Give it. Put it on my head and close my eyes."

'The emperor then seemed to lose consciousness, but after a little, recovered and said: "Where is my son and heir? Is he alive?" "He is alive, please your majesty." The emperor made the sign of the cross and then added: "Thank God! Take me away." The explosion was so great, that in neighbouring houses, in two stories, the double windows were broken.

'On hearing the explosion, the Grand Duke Michael hastened from the palace of the Grand Duchess Catherine and followed in the emperor's traces. The grand duke arrived at the time when the emperor, covered with blood, was placed in a sledge. The emperor still looked around him, and evidently recognised the grand



duke. From the palace a carpet was brought out, the emperor was put upon it, and was thus transported to the bed in his own private apartment. The bed was placed alongside of the writing-table at which he usually wrote. Then the hereditary grand duke, his consort, and other members of the imperial family arrived, together with the doctors. The sufferer lay motionless and uttered low groans. He was carefully undressed. Blood was on his face. Both his legs were shattered. The lower part of his stomach was also injured. The terrible loss of blood rendered the emperor's position hopeless. The medical men spoke of amputating both legs, but before they finally decided to do so, his majesty expired.'

From the *Peterboorgskaia Viedomosti* we quote the following details:—

'On investigation of the emperor's state, it appeared that both legs below the knee were transformed into masses of separate fibres, on which hung pieces of bone and flesh; the softer parts bore traces of burning. On the left upper eyelid were also marks as of burning. The glove on the right hand was stained with blood. As he approached the Winter Palace, the emperor seemed to lose consciousness, from the great loss of blood. A few muscles remaining were the only junctions between the knees and the lower parts of the legs, for the bones had been totally shattered by the explosion. Doctors Krooglevski and Markus first appeared, and immediately endeavoured to aid the sufferer. Dr. Dvoriashine, of the 4th Battalion of Imperial Archers, was accidentally in a neighbouring building, and on hearing the exclamation, "The emperor is wounded!" at once hastened to the palace, and at the door of his majesty's apartment met Dr. Krooglevski. "Bring all necessary for amputation, as soon as possible," said he. Dr. Dvoriashine rushed to Dr. Krooglevski's abode, and speedily returned with the appliances. Dr. Botkine was already on the spot, and with the utmost attention followed the beating of the heart. Bandages were then placed on the legs above the knees. It was also decided to bandage the right hand. When Dr. Dvoriashine took off the blood-stained glove, the hand bore traces of burning. The nuptial ring was also bruised flat. The bandage was then put on. Dr. Botkine thereupon remarked that the heart beat more distinctly, and that breathing was stronger. The imperial confessor—the archpresbyter Bajanov—then profited by the favourable interval, and administered the holy communion to the sufferer. It was a solemn moment. It seemed as if hope revived. But fate decreed otherwise. Dr. Botkine remarked that the beating of the heart became more feeble. Breath also grew fainter, till finally, at twenty-five minutes to four P.M., Alexander II. expired. All the

members of the imperial family then in St. Petersburg were assembled near the death-bed of their august relative.'

Another periodical, entitled *Gazeta Poriadok*, or *Gazette of Order*, mentions that 'not long before the fatal event above narrated, a small parcel, seemingly containing pills, was sent addressed to the emperor, and came by the St. Petersburg post from Paris. On the pill-box was the signature of a "Doctor Jus." The pills were, besides, wrapped up in a paper, which contained strong recommendation of the accompanying remedy, especially for asthma and rheumatism. The pills reached their destination safely, and in no wise occasioned the suspicion of Podliagine, the emperor's servant, who told his majesty of their arrival. The emperor was always much interested in remedies for the above-mentioned ailments, so he gave the small parcel to Dr. Botkine. The latter, on reaching home, took off the outward cover of the little box, and saw that it was tied by a thread, the ends of which somewhat projected. He then pulled one of the threads, but heard a slight crack, like that of a pop-gun. Dr. Botkine then thought that it was merely a trick; but, as he had received the parcel directly from the emperor's hand, suspected nothing dangerous, and accordingly put the parcel aside. However, the emperor's alarm, when, after asking about the pills, the doctor mentioned the cracking sound, caused serious attention to be paid to the parcel. It was then sent to Count Loris Melikov, minister of the interior. On careful examination, it turned out that this was a new attempt on his majesty's life—an attempt conceived with truly diabolical craft and boldness. The would-be pills contained so large a quantity of dynamite that its explosion was sufficient not only to kill two or three persons standing near, but even to tear them in pieces. On undoing the parcel of pills, Dr. Botkine owed the safety of his life merely to the fact that apparently the mechanism called into action by the projecting ends of the strings, and which produced a noise, had either been injured by damp, or was in some other way spoiled, and thus could not produce the desired effect.'

According to another newspaper—*The New Times (Novoi Vremia)*—'Pills were only mentioned on the outward cover of the box. Its real contents were not pills, but an apparatus for explosion. On the ticket of the box, and annexed to a letter sent from abroad along with the pills, was the signature of "Dr. Lejuge."'

The newspaper above quoted then continues to describe the scene of the last attempt on the emperor's life:—

‘At the moment of the explosion which occurred yesterday, Matetshev, one of the Cossacks, lay dead, somewhat behind the imperial carriage. Near the pavement of the quay, another Cossack, seated on the coach-box along with the coachman Mantzev, was leaning forward exhausted and convulsively grasping the coach-box. On the same pavement, about thirty steps onwards, lay a poor boy, groaning and moaning. Near him was a basket with meat, which he had been carrying on his head. He was fatally wounded by a splinter from the bomb. Not far from him stood an officer, also wounded, and leaning in a languishing condition on the fence of the quay. In front, not far off, lay a sentinel on the ground. Some workmen, carrying a sofa, also stood stupefied there. At last, rather aside, a man was seen to withdraw hastily. He had long locks fastened to his hat, and wore a dark-blue overcoat. The emperor immediately pointed to him, and then went towards the wounded officer and the boy. But his majesty had not yet walked half the distance between him and them, when a new explosion took place, and white smoke appeared all around. That was the second bomb thrown by the criminals, one of whom, as is supposed, stood on the ice on the canal. At the spot where the first explosion took place, a small cavity had been formed; where the second explosion happened there was, however, no cavity, probably because, during the first explosion, the carriage had offered some resistance to the action of the gas. On the surrounding snow were seen pieces of grey cloth, as if from a military overcoat. On the pavement of the canal lay a heap of things, hats, swords, coats, etc., surrounded by several soldiers of the Pavlovski regiment. There, near a pool of blood, lay tossed about an officer’s overcoat with a fur collar; fragments of a broken sword; the hat of a police functionary; fragments of wood; shreds of black cloth, probably from the Cossack’s costume. There also was a basket with meat, and not far distant a small soft sofa, without a cover. To-day a large crowd is flocking to the spot where the crime took place.’

In another newspaper, entitled *The Beehive*, March 3, 1881, a curious fact is mentioned as follows:—

‘About two weeks ago, the emperor remarked that every morning two pigeons lay killed near the window of his private apartment. It turned out that a large bird of prey—some said a kite, others an eagle—had taken up its abode on the roof of the Winter Palace. For several days all attempts to kill the bird proved fruitless. The event discomposed the emperor; he considered it as a bad omen. At length a trap was placed, and the bird’s foot caught therein. The bird, however, had strength enough to drag the trap to a neighbouring square, but was



there caught. The bird turned out to be a kite of unusually large dimensions, so that it will be stuffed and kept in a museum.

'On March 1, 1881 (the fatal day), about ten o'clock in the evening, a strange object was witnessed: a large bright comet was seen in the sky. The comet had tails—one above; another, still longer, below. The whole appeared for about twenty minutes.

'When the last fatal attempt was made on the emperor's life, an extraordinary discovery took place. A whole street in St. Petersburg had been excavated, with the intention of there forming a mine for explosive materials. Some time previously, an underground shop had been hired by an individual who called himself a peasant, named Kobozev. He pretended there to carry on trade in milk and cheese.

'One evening, it was found out that Kobozev and a young woman who lived beside him as his wife had both disappeared and left the shop empty. The police then came and found the shop full of sand, as well as different instruments for digging. An underground excavation for a considerable distance had been made, and reached nearly to the middle of the street. The excavation was evidently intended as a mine, in which an explosion was to blow up part of the city, where the emperor was expected to pass.'

## CHAPTER LX

### CHRONOLOGICAL LIST OF REMARKABLE EVENTS DURING THE REIGN OF ALEXANDER II.

1855, 19th February.—Alexander II. ascended the throne of Russia.

1855, 12th July.—By imperial command, a separate department was formed in St. Petersburg for the arrest of debtors, and named, 'House for the detention of negligent debtors.'

1855, July.—A new and improved code of military law was issued.

1856.—Termination of the Crimean war. Peace of Paris concluded, 18th March.

1856, 26th August.—Solemn coronation of Alexander II. in the Cathedral of the Assumption, in Moscow.

1856, December.—Limitation of the right to acquire nobility according to grades.

1857, November 20.—First mandate of the emperor to the governor-general of Vilna, concerning the amelioration of peasants' condition.

- 1858.—New code of laws of the Russian empire published, previously edited in 1857.
- 1858.—By the treaty of Aigoonsk the territory along the river Amoor was annexed to Russia.
- 1858, November.—By imperial decree, those who had attained the age of sixty years, and who were afflicted by illness, could not be sent in exile to Siberia, either by administration or by sentence of societies, or by proprietors.
- 1859.—Shamyl besieged in his impregnable fort of Goonib, surrendered as a prisoner of war to the Russian viceroy, Prince Bariatinski, and all the eastern part of the Caucasus submitted to Russia.
- 1859.—Military service of common soldiers abridged.
- 1860.—Limitation of the power of putting fetters on criminals.
- 1861.—Emancipation of the serfs.
- 1861, 19th February.—New organisation of peasants' condition, and land assigned to them.
- 1862, 8th September.—Thousandth anniversary of the foundation of the Russian state, at Novgorod.
- 1862, 29th September.—Intimation of judicial reform, founded chiefly on verbal interrogation.
- 1863.—Abolition of monopoly of wine. Reorganisation of the town council in Moscow and in Odessa, according to that of St. Petersburg. Abolition of corporal punishment, saving for a few exceptions. New regulations for universities. Institution of a new council to ameliorate the condition of the Russian clergy.
- 1863.—In January, in some parts of the kingdom of Poland, in consequence of recruiting, attacks were made on several Russian detachments. In Polish forests and in western governments of the empire, bands of rebel Poles appeared. Towards the close of the year the revolt was subdued. General Mooraviev was then nominated commander of the north-western country, and Count Berg viceroy of the kingdom of Poland. In September, the diet of Finland was convoked for the second time since the annexation of Finland to Russia.
- 1864, 1st January.—New zemski (rural) administration in the empire.
- 1864, 19th February.—Manifesto granting land to Polish peasants.
- 1864.—During the spring of the same year, the conquest of western Caucasus was completed, while the newly appointed viceroy of that region, the Grand Duke Michael Nikolaevitch, was in office.

- 1865.—New press laws, which limited the decision of the censor.
- 1865, 16th July.—Few tradesmen were permitted to remove from western governments, and to settle in various districts of the empire.
- 1865.—Law concerning the obligatory sale of confiscated or sequestered land in the west.
- 1865, 10th December.—Laws concerning those who violated regulations concerning dramatic representations.
- 1866, April.—New courts of justice opened in St. Petersburg and in Moscow; judges of peace appointed there.
- 1866, 19th February.—Reorganisation of finances, postal and provincial administration in the kingdom of Poland. (The latter was divided into ten governments or provinces.)
- 1867.—By treaty, Russian possessions in North America were ceded to the United States, for a pecuniary recompense.
- 1867, 11th July.—A general governor was nominated in Turkestan and in regions occupied by Russian troops in 1866, beyond Seer Daria.
- 1869.—A ukaze of May 26 exempted the children of priests and of church servants from being obliged to follow the clerical calling.
- 1870, 16th July.—New regulations concerning the administration of towns, founded on the commencement of self-government, and putting aside different classes in the choice of individuals to fill civic functions.
- 1870, 19th October.—By a circular of Prince Gortschakov, chancellor of the empire, one clause of the Peace of Paris was changed, by which the Black Sea was declared neutral. In this wise, Russia again obtained a right there to maintain a fleet of war.
- 1870, 4th November.—Preliminary preparation for obligatory military service in Russia.
- 1871, June.—Count Tolstoi, minister of public instruction, augmented classic element in middle schools.
- 1873.—Campaign of the Russians in Heeva, under command of the Turkestan general-governor Von Kaufman. The Russian troops overcame all difficulties of the expedition, in sandy deserts, devoid of water, and took Heeva, May 29.
- 1877-8.—Russo-Turkish war. Deliverance of the Slavonians.
- 1878, 19th February.—Peace of San Stephano.
- 1879, 19th January.—Conferences in Berlin.
- 1879-81.—Conquest of the Techintzi, a race occupying the eastern regions of the Caspian Sea.



It is thus that Safonov, in his *Historical Sketch of the Life and Reign of Alexander II.* (p. 125), describes the Techintzi:—

‘Towards the east of the Caspian Sea dwells the race of the Techintzi. They are known in all Asia for their bravery and military daring.

‘The Techintzi are distinguished by tall stature and remarkable strength, by which they profit in order to make predatory incursions on the Bucharts and Persians. Not only do the Techintzi attack caravans which they meet on their way, but often, assembled in bands of several men, cross the Persian frontiers, enter neighbouring villages, and there demand cattle and money.

‘The Techintzi take women prisoners; and on the slightest contradiction, make free use of the scourge and sabre, both of which they wield to perfection. The cowardly Persians dare not offer opposition, well knowing that instead of only a few, a large band of Techintzi will come and slaughter the whole village, to the last inhabitant.

‘The very name of Techinetz terrifies a Persian. It is said that once several Techintzi attacked a Persian prince who was travelling in his own country, along with his followers. The latter fled, and the Techintzi overtook the prince. He remained alone on the spot, when he was overtaken by the elder of the Techintzi. The prince possessed great strength, and threw down the Techinetz; then pressing his knee on his enemy’s breast, drew out a dagger and was about to slay him. At that moment the Techinetz exclaimed—

“How darest thou, dog, raise thy vile dagger on me? Knowest thou not that I am a Techinetz?”

‘At the word Techinetz, the prince was seized with terror, and fled at full speed.

‘The Techintzi possess admirable horses, and are at the same time famous archers. Their sabres cause wounds so deadly, that few recover from them, or even remain alive after being struck down. To split a skull in two at a single blow, or to cut off an arm from the shoulder, or to cut a body in two, is nothing to a Techinetz. In engagements, hand to hand, the Techintzi not unfrequently wrest arms from the Russian soldiers, or, with an iron grasp, break their pikes.

‘The Techintzi finally began to make inroads on Russian frontiers and to plunder the Geomoods, the Goklans, and other tribes friendly to Russia.

‘Then Russian troops marched against the Techintzi, but the brave young Russian general Lazareff, who commanded the Russians, fell ill and died (1879). He was replaced by General Lamakina. When he advanced towards the fort of Geok-Tépé, the Techintzi made a bold sally; even the women shot at the Russian troops, and fought with them. The Cossacks seized one pretty young Techinetz

girl, and brought her as a prisoner of war to General Lamakina. The general, by an interpreter, said to her: "Fear not! No harm will be done to thee!"

"I fear nothing!" replied she proudly. "You may do to me what you wish; but you all, Giaours, may be terrified and fear us! Not one of you will leave our country alive!"

'From esteem for courage so remarkable, the prisoner was set at liberty.

'This single example, however, shows with what a race the Russians had to struggle. At a later period, 12th January 1881, the celebrated Russian general Skobelev conquered the Techintzi, by taking their fort, Geok-Tépé, whereupon the whole race submitted to "The White (or Great)" Sovereign of Russia.

'The Turks surnamed Skobelev "Ak-Pasha," or "White General." (White, in Oriental language, signifies great.)'

## CHAPTER LXI

### FAMILY OF THE EMPEROR ALEXANDER II.

FROM the marriage of the Emperor Alexander II. (16th April 1841) to the Princess Mary of Hesse-Darmstadt (daughter of Duke Louis II.), known as empress of Russia by the names of Maria Alexandrovna, there was born a daughter, Alexandra Alexandrovna, 18th August 1842. This princess died in 1849.

On 8th September 1843 was born a son, the Hereditary Grand Duke Nikolai Alexandrovitch, who died 12th April 1865.

In 1845 was born a son, subsequently the Emperor Alexander III.

In 1847, a son, the Grand Duke Vladimir Alexandrovitch.

In 1850, 2nd February, a son, the Grand Duke Alexei Alexandrovitch.

In 1853, 5th October, a daughter, Mary (Maria Alexandrovna), now duchess of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha.

In 1857, 22nd April, a son, Sergius Alexandrovitch.

In 1860, a son, the Grand Duke Pavel (Paul) Alexandrovitch.

The Empress Maria Alexandrovna died 22nd May (3rd June, N.S.) 1880.

THE END

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